

**HISTORY OF THE  
FIRST VERMONT CAVALRY  
VOLUNTEERS  
IN THE  
WAR OF THE GREAT REBELLION**

by  
Horace K. Ide of Company D

edited and additional material by Elliott W. Hoffman

**Butternut & Blue  
2000**

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**CAPTAIN HORACE K. IDE AS  
QUARTERMASTER GENERAL OF VERMONT**

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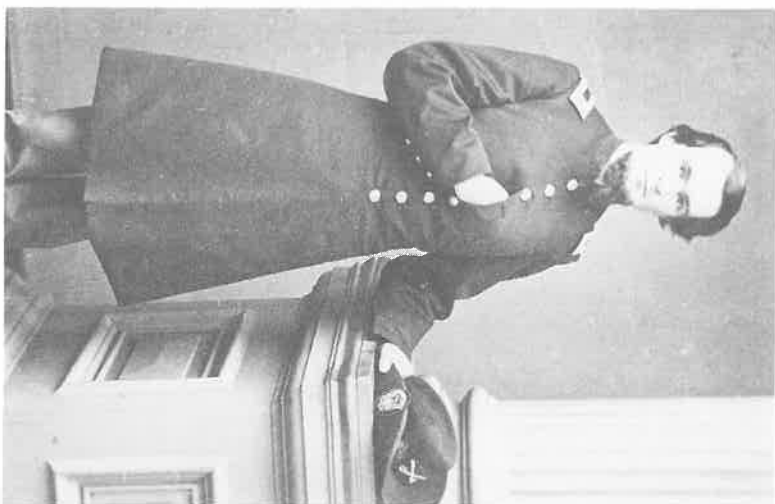
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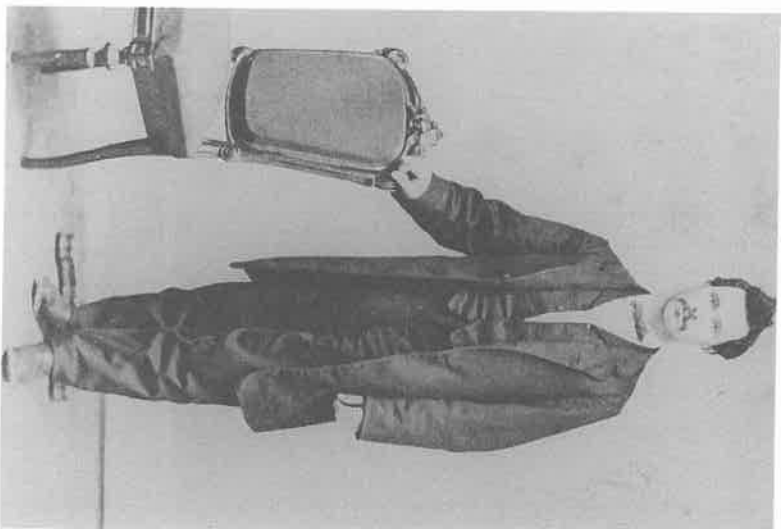
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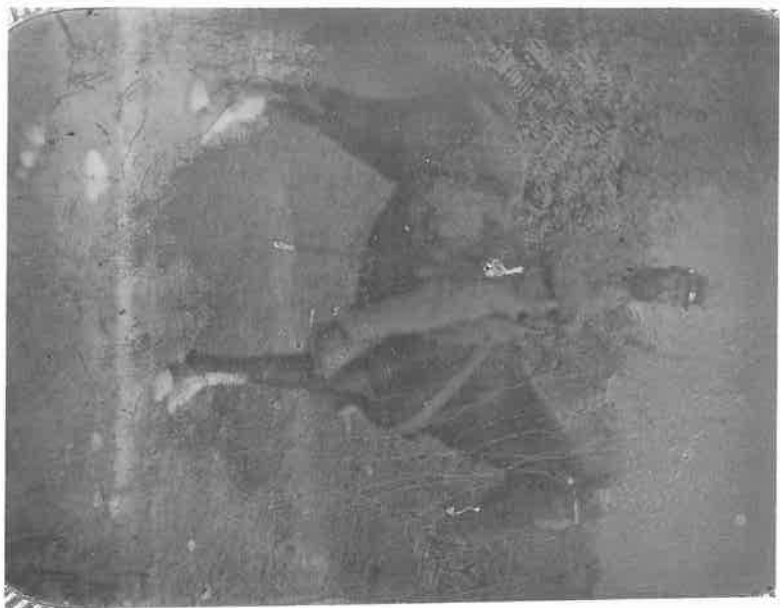
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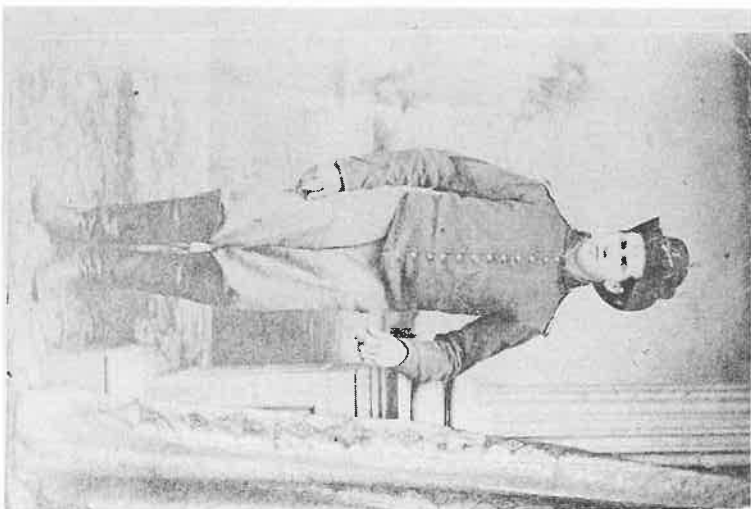
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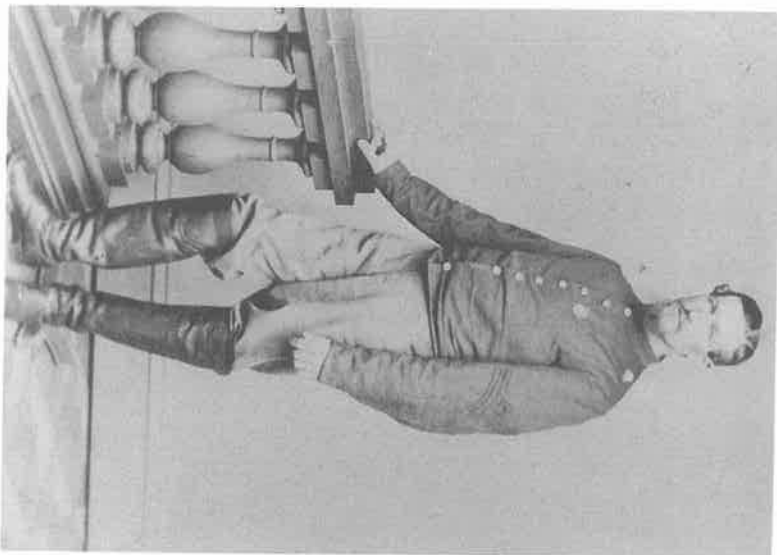
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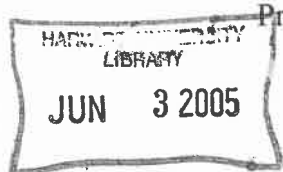


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**ISBN 0-935523-74-X**



Printed in the United States of America  
on acid-free paper.

**Published in 2000  
as the twenty-seventh volume of the  
*ARMY OF THE POTOMAC SERIES***

by

**Butternut & Blue**

3411 Northwind Road  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
410-256-9220  
bbcwbks@mdo.net

*This first edition is limited to 1,000 copies*

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*Photographic supplement opposite page 204.*

## PREFACE

In the ever expanding world of Civil War publishing it is rare to discover full-fledged memoirs or regimental histories that have been overlooked by historians and have never been published. However, this is the case of Horace Knights Ide's history of the First Vermont Cavalry that he wrote in 1872 and set aside without finding a publisher.

I have been interested in the history of the First Vermont Cavalry since my great-uncle Louie Hoffman told me the stories of his grandfather Daniel Morton Russell, who served three years in the regiment and who died of his wounds years after the end of the war. Louie was born in Hoo-sick Falls, New York in 1895, the same town where Russell was born in 1824, and remembered playing with his grandfather's uniform and Sharps carbine at the Russell family home in North Bennington, Vermont. Russell died there in 1878 from spinal paralysis brought on by being severely wounded at Middletown, Virginia on May 24, 1862. His horse fell upon him in an unwise, mad charge down the Valley Turnpike into a burst of canister from Confederate artillery that dismounted most of companies A and G and three companies of the trailing First Maine Cavalry. Russell later recalled that he received the following injuries: "while in a charge my horse fell on to me and broke 2 of my ribs and injured my left knee & ankle. I also received two sabre cuts upon my left shoulder at the same charge [from the sabre of his falling left hand file member]. The results of these injuries and wound incapacitates me at times..." says his pension application, written just three weeks before his death. After being rescued from a Rebel hospital in a church in Middletown he spent several months in a hospital at Fairfax Court House, and being unable to perform duty with the regiment, Russell served most of 1863 and until February 1864 in the military hospital in Brattleboro, Vermont. He returned to duty, only to be captured by some of Mosby's men while on picket and endured most of the summer of 1864 in a prison hospital in Richmond until his parole in August. He returned to Vermont to be mustered out that November.<sup>1</sup>

This was pretty heady stuff for a fourteen year-old boy to discover. I managed to purchase a copy of G. G. Benedict's fine *Vermont in the Civil War* that contains a good 150-page history of the regiment in the second volume. In 1888 Benedict used a manuscript of one Captain H. K. Ide as a source for the history and quoted the captain several times. As it turned out, Ide then served as Quartermaster General of the Vermont Militia and was on familiar terms with newspaperman and historian Benedict, who



himself had served on General George Stannard's staff of the Second Vermont Brigade at Gettysburg.

My teenage interest in the Civil War brought me to Gettysburg College in 1965, where I spent more than my share of hours walking the battlefield. I attended the University of Vermont after a term on active duty as a military intelligence officer and discovered the papers of William Wells in UVM's library in 1972. Wells became the foremost Vermont cavalryman during the Civil War. He enlisted as a private and rose on his merit to Brevet Major General, winning the Medal of Honor for his actions during Farnsworth's Charge at Gettysburg. I wrote a military biography of Wells for my master's thesis and planned to someday edit Wells's letters for publication. I did not get back to this project until 1992, but I found a microfilm copy of Ide's regimental history at the Vermont Historical Society the following year while searching for collateral evidence and immediately recognized its worth. I wanted to locate the original manuscript, but was hampered by the fact that the name of the "owner" was wrong and actually turned out to be the person who brought the manuscript to Montpelier in 1968 to have it microfilmed by the state. This man had died in the 1980's and I truly felt that I was up against a dead end.

In January 1994 I received a call from Jeffrey Marshall, curator of manuscripts at the Special Collections Department of UVM's Bailey/Howe Library, who informed me that Mr. Philip Ide of Fletcher, Vermont had brought in his great-grandfather's manuscript for deposit.

The original had surfaced just seven months after I had begun looking for it. A quick trip to Burlington confirmed that the microfilm and manuscript were one and the same and that Mr. Ide desired that his great-grandfather's book finally be published. H. K. Ide's son, Dr. Philip Sheridan Ide, took the original south when he moved to suburban Boston to pursue his career as a physician in the late 19th century and great-grandson Philip brought it back to Vermont when he moved north in the middle of this century. In 1968 he had the manuscript microfilmed and donated the film to the Vermont Historical Society.

Horace K. Ide wrote the history in 1872 in a legal size ledger, using the right hand page for his text and the left hand page for quotes, questions to himself, and other notes. The manuscript numbers about 400 pages of text in long hand and has neither paragraphs nor chapters. In a letter written from Jacksonville, Florida to his friend William Wells, then Adjutant General of Vermont, on February 11, 1872 Ide says:

I have been absent on a little trip up the St. Johns river and upon my return last night found your letter and the Adjutant Gen Reports which I wish to acknowledge the receipt of and for which please accept my thanks. You say nothing about expense so I cannot remit till I know the amount.

In regard to my History. I do not expect that its literary merits will be great, as I never flattered myself that I had any gifts that way, but I am in hopes that it will be as correct a record as is possible under the circumstances. I am keeping a record of points of which I am in doubt and very likely will send you a list of questions sometime. Of course, as now written it will contain more about Co. D than any other, but I am leaving every other page blank to be filled in with whatever may be of interest in regard to other companies that I get hold of.

My health is improving and I am enjoying myself finely this winter.<sup>2</sup>

The twice wounded and once imprisoned, Captain Ide eventually succumbed to his wounds in 1897. The manuscript exists just as Ide describes it in his letter. Unfortunately, he was never able to get information from any of the other companies and except for G. G. Benedict and family members, few people have seen the manuscript since 1872.

Horace Knights Ide was born in Barnet, Vermont in 1842 to Jacob and Ladoski Knights Ide. The Ides descended from Nicholas Ide who arrived in Massachusetts Bay from England in 1636 and who settled in Rehoboth (then the Plymouth Colony) in 1643. His great-grandson John Ide fought in the Revolution and then moved at the end of the war to St. Johnsbury in the independent country of Vermont. John's son Timothy bought a gristmill in nearby Passumpsic in 1813. In 1866 H. K. and brother Elmore Timothy purchased the family milling business and incorporated the E.T. and H. K. Ide Company, which is today the oldest family-owned and operated milling company in the United States and is still quite familiar to residents of the upper Connecticut Valley.

Upon the breaking out of the Civil War in 1861 Horace first enlisted as a corporal in Company F, First Vermont Cavalry on September 14, 1861, a company raised in Windham County in the southeast corner of the state. Ide was transferred to Company D on December 1, 1861, a company from his native Caledonia County. He rose in command until he be-

came Company D's last captain. Elmore Ide, however, opted to purchase a substitute and did not join his brother at the front.

H. K. Ide served throughout Banks's Shenandoah Valley Campaign and the beginning of Pope's campaign until he and another scout were captured by Confederate infantry near Gordonsville on July 16, 1862. He survived a brief incarceration at Libby and Belle Isle prisons until he was paroled on September 12 along with all prisoners captured from the regiment that spring and summer. He left parole camp at Annapolis, Maryland and returned to the regiment, which was located at Fort Scott in Alexandria, Virginia. Because he had not been exchanged, and therefore could not perform combat duty, he returned home without leave, but with the knowledge of his company officers. He kept his departure secret by donning civilian clothes to get him by the provost guard. These garments were possibly provided by his close friend, 1st Lieutenant William G. Cummings. After having enjoyed a couple of quite illegal months at home at taxpayers's expense, Ide rejoined the regiment at the end of December when Cummings alerted him that he had been exchanged.

Ide's superiors obviously held him in high regard, for upon his return from his winked-at AWOL, he was promoted to sergeant. Ide served on the Vermonters's extended picket line throughout the winter. On April 1, 1863 at a skirmish near Miskell's Farm, Mosby's guerrillas sharply defeated a Vermont detachment sent to capture them. Ide was among the last of nearly one hundred Union troopers taken prisoner during the worst defeat suffered by the 1st Vermont Cavalry during the entire war. Ide, noticing that he and Mosby's men were dressed alike, boldly walked through the guards and escaped. Two days of on-the-job escape and evasion brought him to the picket lines of the Department of Washington and demonstrated that Sergeant Ide had a full share of bravery and grit in the best tradition of noncommissioned officers of the United States Army.

Ide served throughout the Gettysburg and Rappahannock campaigns until being wounded in the ribs by a bullet at Buckland on October 19, 1863. The dangerous wound entailed a lengthy stay in hospitals in Washington and Vermont. While at home he reenlisted for an additional three-year term on January 21, 1864. He returned to the regiment in March and on May 1st became company first sergeant and fought at the Wilderness, Yellow Tavern, Haw's Shop, and in Wilson's Raid. After a bout with sickness in August, Ide rejoined the regiment in the Shenandoah Valley only to be shot in the testicles while fighting dismounted at the Opequan on September 19, 1864. This wound sidelined him until December, but when he returned he found he had been promoted to 1st lieutenant. He rode as com-

pany commander with Sheridan across Virginia in March 1865 and was at the front of his company when Lee surrendered on April 9th at Appomattox Court House. Ide was promoted to captain on May 9, 1865 and was mustered out on June 21st.

Horace K. Ide returned to Vermont to go into business with brother Elmore. H. K. married Margaret Hidden Chamberlain in 1867 and the couple had just one son, Doctor Philip Sheridan Ide, who practiced medicine in Wayland, Massachusetts. H. K. remained in the Vermont Militia and served as Commissary General in the 1880's when Benedict used his manuscript as a source.

In 1902 the Re-union Society of the regiment published a roster of survivors and brief historical sketch that includes the story of an attempt to write a regimental history. The society voted five hundred dollars to have someone pen a regimental history in the early 1870's, and in 1876 the committee reported that Captain H. K. Ide had been appointed as a committee of one to write "as full and complete history of the services of the regiment as he might be able to do." The subject of a regimental history was not brought up again until 1899.

Captain Ide, to whom was given the work, had died, it was finally, after much discussion, decided, that if a written history was ever produced, it must be by some comrade taking a certain period of time in the existence of the regiment, and confine himself to that period only, not undertaking to cover the whole time of service of the regiment. A second comrade to write up the experiences of the regiment for another period, and so on until the whole term of service was covered.<sup>3</sup>

The historical committee reported that in 1902 enough of these papers have been written to cover the history of the regiment from muster-in to Gettysburg. Just where this draft history is today remains a mystery.

From this it seems likely that Ide's history never got published because he was unable to get information from the other eleven companies to fill out his work to meet the expectations of the regiment's veterans. The veterans found that "in discussing the matter it was remarked that no two persons saw the same incident precisely alike, hence the difficulty in writing a satisfactory history."<sup>4</sup> Upon reaching this impasse, the regimental history floundered and went no further.

## Ide As a Writer and Historian

H. K. Ide wrote his history long before the printing of the *Official Records of the Civil War*. He relied upon his memory (and probably letters home), his diaries, the *Vermont Adjutant General Reports* for the war years, the several volumes of the *Rebellion Record* (an attempt beginning in 1862 to document the war), plus accounts such as Swinton's *History of the Army of the Potomac*, von Borcke's *Memoirs*, and Gilmor's *Four Years in the Army*. He lists all his sources and often provides page numbers. He is quick to point out von Borcke's egotism and his inability to reconcile his memories of fighting Gilmor with Gilmor's account. (The evidence supports Ide, not Gilmor.)

Ide provides enough details to trace his actions even on modern maps and his narrative can be used to walk those battlefields that are still preserved and perform a "staff ride" or a belated "intelligence preparation of the battlefield." His details of life in the regiment are not generally found in any other sources and greatly add to an understanding of serving in a nineteenth century cavalry regiment.

Ide is particularly evenhanded in dealing with his fellow soldiers. Many published accounts gloss over weaknesses and shortcomings in soldiers who either fought for the Union or the Lost Cause. Ide does not. He does not suffer fools gladly and this might go far to explain why his book never got to the publisher. Some of his characterizations are quite frank and open and are not flattering to men alive in 1872. Ide had a mistrust of colonels Jonas Holliday, Charles Tompkins, and Edward Sawyer. He never says anything bad about his friend Wells, but Addison Preston, who generally is treated positively by members of the regiment and officers outside of the regiment, is not so highly favored. Preston was Ide's company commander and nearly got Ide killed by his aggressive tactics. Ide takes sardonic pleasure in reporting that during the company's first skirmish at Mount Jackson "the only casualties reported were Captain Preston's horse (Old Dan) wounded by the rider with his own sabre."

Because Ide wrote these memoirs so soon after the war, they are free from the romanticism with which many Union and Confederate veterans later embellished their works. Ide writes with freshness and candor and the bitter humor of a soldier who has looked into Hell. He is fiercely proud of his unit and it is clear that he considers the death of the Confederacy the greatest accomplishment of the age. And it is important to him to have helped destroy it.

Ide, like many nineteenth century writers and twentieth century students, wrote in the passive tense. I have avoided the urge to rewrite his sentences in the active voice. I have left Ide's work alone except for cleaning up a few particularly convoluted sentences.

I have treated Ide's manuscript as the first draft of a projected book. He used very few paragraphs in his four hundred pages and did not divide the work into chapters. I formed the paragraphs and chapters, and sometimes chose from two or three words Ide indicated that he was concerned about using. I made spelling and punctuation changes where necessary. I also wrote chapters five, six and sixteen to complete the history of the regiment during those times in which he was absent, wounded, or in prison, employing other primary source material as much as possible to give voice to other Vermont cavalymen.

## The Regiment

The State of Vermont organized its soldiers with two salient conditions generally not followed by other Northern states during the Civil War. First, each regiment was commanded by a West Point graduate (who need not have been a native) or a colonel who had seen combat. Second, the state sent recruits to all existing regiments throughout the war to keep them reasonably full.

However, the First Vermont Cavalry seems particularly unfortunate in its senior commanders. The first colonel, fifty year-old farmer and physician Lemuel Platt, is the archetype of the middle aged politicians who plagued Federal and Confederate regiments at the beginning of the war. Platt had the good sense to resign before entering combat. Captain Jonas Holliday, a West Point graduate and company commander in the 2nd United States Cavalry replaced Platt in February 1862, but committed suicide just six weeks later at Strasburg, Virginia, probably as a result of personal problems. Captain Charles Tompkins, also of the 2nd United States, took over one day before Banks's Retreat in the Shenandoah Valley on May 23, 1862. He led the regiment through the summer under John Pope, but resigned after what Tompkins would later call interference by Governor Frederick Holbrook. Nobody seems to have regretted his leaving and Tompkins never again took to the field in his subsequent thirty-year career as a quartermaster.

Tompkins's resignation set off a lengthy power struggle between Major Edward Sawyer and Major William Collins that is described in Chapter Six. Sawyer was promoted to colonel, but was immediately re-

moved by the War Department, won reinstatement, and fended off court martial charges brought by a jealous Collins. But Sawyer failed to be the strong leader that the men looked for, and even though Sawyer commanded the regiment, and at times the brigade, he left the Army at the end of April 1864 under a cloud.

Sawyer's resignation cleared the way for Lieutenant Colonel Addison Preston to become colonel. Preston had led the regiment during the many times that Sawyer was absent. He even commanded George Armstrong Custer's Michigan Brigade (to which the 1st Vermont belonged from August 1863 to April 1864) during the end of the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren Raid, replacing the ineffective Sawyer in the field. Noted as a daring and effective leader throughout the Cavalry Corps, Preston was killed at Haw's Shop on June 3, 1864 after just a month in command. Major William Wells replaced Preston and was promoted to colonel.

William Wells is Vermont's premier cavalry soldier. He enlisted as a private in Company C in September 1861, was elected first lieutenant, and commissioned captain when the regiment was mustered in on November 19th. Wells was promoted major in the following October and commanded the regiment's second battalion until Preston's death. After being promoted to colonel, Wells commanded the Second Brigade of the Third Cavalry Division after the wounding of Colonel George Chapman on September 19, 1864 at the Battle of Opequan. He retained that command until the end of the war. In July 1865 Wells became the last commander of the Cavalry Corps and eventually received the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. Although the actions of Lemuel Platt, Jonas Holliday, Charles Tompkins, and Edward Sawyer are undistinguished and perhaps weak, Preston and Wells are among the best volunteer regimental commanders to serve during the Civil War.

The state organized the regiment in the fall of 1861 along the model of United States cavalry regiments prior to the summer of 1861: ten companies led by a colonel, lieutenant colonel and two majors, all armed with Savage revolvers and sabres. Ten men in each company additionally carried Sharps carbines. Charles Tompkins had the original issue condemned in June 1862 and the War Department issued Beals Patent Remington Revolvers and Model 1860 sabres as replacements. Companies D, E, I, and K also received Sharps carbines, resulting in the regiment having a light cavalry battalion to fight mounted and a dragoon battalion to fight dismounted.

The state recruited companies L and M in the summer and fall of 1862 to bring the regiment up to the twelve company standard. The state

of Vermont, unlike most northern states, continued to furnish recruits for its standing regiments, and the cavalry seems to have always been a favorite unit for recruits, so that the 1st Vermont Cavalry rode into battle with over six hundred men present for duty on a number of occasions through the war.

After ten months in the Department of Washington, losing and winning skirmishes with partisan guerrilla John S. Mosby, the Vermonters became part of Elon Farnsworth's First Brigade of Judson Kilpatrick's Third Cavalry Division and served with that unit throughout the Gettysburg Campaign. Farnsworth died at the head of Wells's battalion on the afternoon of the third day of the battle while making a headlong charge on Confederate infantry that was ordered by Kilpatrick. Gettysburg became the bloodiest day of the war for the 1st Vermont Cavalry. As organized throughout 1863, the Vermonters employed two battalions of light cavalry carrying a mixture of Colt and Remington revolvers, sabres, and a few men armed with Sharps carbines. The Third Battalion was the dragoon battalion as all of the men carried carbines, but this battalion was detached at the headquarters of the Sixth Corps from October 1863 to April 1864 (Company M remained as Second Corps escort until September 1864). In a letter home on December 10, 1863, Major William Wells, then in command of the two battalions with the regiment, wrote "Am trying to arm my regiment with Spencer 9 [7] Shooting carbines. They can be reloaded as quick as a one shooter carbine 'Sharps.' I have in the commd only about 50 Carbines & it is not at all pleasant to Picket with pistols against Infantry with Rifles."<sup>5</sup>

After the close of the Gettysburg Campaign, the regiment joined George A. Custer's Michigan cavalry brigade and fought with the Wolverines until the following spring. The Vermonters had been trained to fight as light cavalry, to fight on horseback with pistols and sabres, rather than to dismount and operate as dragoons or mounted infantry. As such, the men of the regiment idolized Custer and his mounted tactics. In April 1864, when Kilpatrick was transferred to Sherman's army, the Vermonters were the only regiment to march to his headquarters as a body to bid him goodbye, a tribute to a man they and others called "Kilcavalry."

Transferred back to the Second Brigade, then under George Chapman, the 1st Vermont fought throughout the spring and summer as mounted infantry under the despised Chapman and overrated division commander James Harrison Wilson. Perhaps the highest point in the campaign was when Custer called upon Addison Preston to attack alongside the Michigan regiments at Yellow Tavern in the advance that killed J. E. B. Stuart,



leaving a disgusted George Chapman in the rear complaining to Phil Sheridan about Custer's unwarranted interference with his brigade. The lowest point had to be the near destruction of the regiment (and the potential destruction of all Third Division regiments) during Wilson's Raid upon the railroads in the rear of Petersburg in late June and early July. However, the 1st Vermont was one of just two of Wilson's regiments to maintain their organization throughout those two weeks.

All the enlisted men carried carbines after the spring of 1864, mostly Sharps with a few Spencers. Men returning from the remount camp at Giesboro brought back Burnside carbines, so that the regiment needed three types of carbine ammunition in combat. Ide reports that he was able to fully issue Spencers to his company in February 1865 and then only because a fellow company commander ordered twice as many Spencers as he had men and Ide pounced on the overage.

The Vermonter's fought in the Shenandoah Valley from August 1864 to March 1865, inflicting great losses upon the Confederate forces at the Opequan, during the burning of the Valley, and at Cedar Creek. At Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864 the regiment set a record that may still stand for a United States Army regiment when, in a single charge, they captured twenty-four guns when Jubal Early's army collapsed. Altogether the regiment captured thirty-nine cannon from the Confederates throughout the war, which may be the greatest number of any federal regiment during the war. Ide lists the damage that the Vermonters inflicted on the Confederate military and infrastructure; it is quite possible that the regiment inflicted more damage on the Confederacy than any other Federal regiment.

From September 19, 1864 to Appomattox, Wells's brigade claims to have inflicted more damage to the Confederacy than any other brigade in the Cavalry Corps and this claim, if correct, is higher than any other brigade in the armies of the Shenandoah, the James, and the Potomac, as well as outstripping claims from Sherman's troops.

After performing well at Five Forks and Namozine Church, it was only fitting that the 1st Vermont Cavalry formed the point of Custer's Third Division at Appomattox and had broken into a trot aimed at Confederate supply trains when the white flag went up. Colonel Josiah Hall, the regiment's last commander, had great difficulty in restraining the lead elements of his regiment from crushing the train guard and capturing the wagons.

The 1st Vermont Cavalry returned with the Corps to Washington and was the first regiment of Grant's forces to pass in review at the Grand Review on May 23, 1865.

The dismounted regiment reached Vermont in June for muster-out, but a sizable detachment remained on guard duty along the Canadian border until August 9, 1865, when the last of the men received their discharges.

In 1889 William F. Fox in his *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War* tabulated the number of the regiment's killed in action and died of wounds at 134, a loss that stands the unit at number five in combat losses of all cavalry regiments in the Union army behind the 1st Maine and the 1st, 5th and 6th Michigan cavalry regiments. By using more sources than those available to Fox, I have determined that losses probably were 136 and might have been 141. I list those killed in action by engagements and their burial locations in Appendix One. I have found that although my casualty totals and those of Fox agree, Fox recorded many errors regarding which battles the casualties actually occurred.

A regimental roster for the 1st Vermont Cavalry can be found in Theodore S. Peck's *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers and Lists of Vermonters Who Served In the Army and Navy of the United States During the War of the Rebellion* (Montpelier, 1892). I have not reprinted this roster because of space limitations. Any person who consults the *Revised Roster* must keep in mind that it contains errors of dates of enlistment, promotion and discharge, and even the ultimate fate of the soldiers. The National Archives's collection of the regimental papers contains the best information, but must be used on a soldier-by-soldier basis.

Although the American Civil War is the most written about event in the history of the world, there remain great gaps in our understanding how and why the generation of the 1860's lived and died as it did. I have spent a great deal of my life inspecting Army units on active duty and in the Reserve and in studying the details of Civil War military history. Yet, if I could travel back to the camp of a cavalry regiment, I would be overwhelmed by all sorts of things that cannot now be recovered: just what did the men and horses look like; what did the camp smell like; how did officers and men treat each other; and what did they talk about. By editing Horace K. Ide's regimental history, he has brought me as close to that time machine as I can ever get. It gives me great pleasure to let other readers take that step backward as well.

Elliott Wheelock Hoffman  
Tiverton, Rhode Island and East Barnard, Vermont  
1999

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book certainly would not have appeared without the cooperation of Mr. Philip Ide of Fletcher, Vermont, great-grandson of Horace Knights Ide and owner of the original manuscript. His brother Nicholas Ide of Hampton, Virginia has greatly assisted me with locating the modern locations of his great-grandfather's marches and fights, particularly at Cold Harbor and Wilson's Raid.

Paul Carnahan and Barney Bloom, librarians at the Vermont Historical Society, assisted me with the microfilm copy of the original manuscript, particularly with obtaining a copy from which to work. Jeffrey Marshall, curator of manuscripts at the Special Collections Department at the University of Vermont Library, gave me access to their valuable collections of material written by 1st Vermont cavalymen, particularly the William Wells Papers. Jeff also put me in contact with Phil Ide, after Phil deposited the original manuscript at UVM. The entire staff at Special Collections has always provided friendly and very efficient service. Wesley Eldred of the UVM library provided me with a copy of his great-grandfather Colonel Edward Sawyer's diary for 1863. Connell Gallagher, assistant director for Special Collections, set all of this in motion while I was up in Burlington on a skiing trip several years ago by suggesting that it was overdue for me to go back to my master's thesis on William Wells and work on the Wells' Papers and the Vermont Cavalry.

Thanks also to curator Betsy Curler of the National Museum of the Morgan Horse in Shelburne, Vermont and Gene Kosche and Joseph Parks at the Bennington Museum and to Tony O'Connor and Dr. David Cross for providing a forum with their Round Tables to discuss the Vermont Cavalry. Donald Wickman provided copies of the letters of James Barrett and Gene Reid sent me copies of his relative Henry Jerdo's letters. Philip Cronenwett, chief of Special Collections at the Dartmouth College Library, provided a copy of the Eri Woodbury Papers.

Dr. Albert Whitaker, former Archivist of the Commonwealth of the Massachusetts State Archives and colleague at Northeastern University, gave assistance at every turn and guided me through the world of public records.

Dr. Richard Sommers and David Keough of the United States Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks have always provided valuable assistance; Dr. Sommers' service rightfully gets acknowledged in countless books on the Civil War. Thanks also to the staff of the Military

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Records Branch of the National Archives, particularly for locating Colonel Edward Sawyer's personal file that had been misfiled through most of this century. Mike Andrus at the Richmond National Military Park and the staffs at Gettysburg, Fredericksburg, Harper's Ferry and Petersburg have always tried to provide specific answers to my questions over a number of years.

I must acknowledge that I forced my children Nathan and Stephanie to accompany me on twenty-five years of battlefield tours. They grew into normal adults anyway.

I could not have completed this book without the support of my wife Charlene. My most grateful thanks to her for everything over the years.

## INTRODUCTION: CAVALRY

Before saying anything about the First Vermont Cavalry in particular, it may be well enough to notice the Cavalry Branch of the service in general, how it stood in the estimation of the Army and of the Country, and of the steps by which it was brought into favor, if only as a poor tribute to the memory of a gallant few, who desiring to distinguish their branch of the service lost their lives before it had gained its repute. It was quite the thing early in the war to sneer at mounted troops.

A distinguished major general is said to have asked, after an engagement, if anyone had seen a dead cavalryman and very likely no one had, for in those primitive days the major generals themselves had not the least idea how to go to work to get cavalry killed, and when anyone did fall they fell through a laudable desire to do something for the Country, and for their own reputation, and not because they had been ordered to do anything hazardous. For a long while they had no united organization. On the Peninsula under McClellan no one in particular commanded the Cavalry. General Stoneman had some, General P. St. George Cooke had considerable, Averell had a little and the Corps Commanders had each a supply and thus it happened that we were all confused and helpless when General Stuart made his raid with the muscular Prussian, who writes for *Blackwoods Magazine*, and a few other troops taken for admiring the Prussian's prowess.<sup>1</sup> We presented the lamentable spectacle in our command of grazing our horses in the finest clover in an open country in broad daylight, while Stuart rode by within a mile or two, the Prussian brandishing his thirsty blade—to which by all accounts King Arthur's "Excalibur" was a poor affair. After they had put many miles between us and them, one brigade went tumbling after them as far as Tunstall Station and thence one regiment was sent in pursuit, with orders to inflict such damage upon the enemy when overtaken as should warn him against attempting a second time to circumvent the Army of the Potomac. If this lone regiment had overtaken the raiders it is horrible to dwell on the certain results and is some compensation for our disgraceful performances as a body, that as individuals we escaped the Prussian, for he would have broken us in pieces as his ancestors the Raisirs broke horse shoes with their fists, but we escaped that fate and went slowly back to camp, and still struggled in the unequal contest.

In the great engagement of the Seven Days fight, the Cavalry did nothing of signal service. One regiment of regulars, under General St. George Cooke, through some mistake, charged gallantly at the Battle of Gaines Mill, like the Six Hundred at Balaklava, only like them to be scattered and broken against the solid lines of James Longstreet's infantry, who no more regarded this feeble onset than the rocks do the beating of the surf.<sup>2</sup>

General Stoneman with a portion of the Cavalry was cut off from the main body of the army and was ordered by Fitz John Porter from Gaines Mill to make his way to Yorktown and thence rejoin the army as circumstances should permit and the movement incidentally was of service in leading astray the enemy under Jackson, whose infantry followed Stoneman's column as far as the hills overlooking the White House, whence they retraced their steps to pursue McClellan across the Chickahominy but the credit to the Cavalry would have been greater had this result been designed.

In the Maryland Campaign General Pleasonton had two good brigades, and was energetic and successful in pushing after the enemy toward the Antietam, but during the great battle, nothing aggressive was attempted by his Cavalry, unless it was the gallop across the bridge on the Sharpsburg Pike under a galling artillery fire and driving away the enemy's guns. After that was done, the troops went into position along the creek, and sat upon their horses under the shelter of some rising ground until the sun went down, all kinds of missiles hurtling over them all day almost harmlessly.<sup>3</sup>

After the battle the scattering process was again resorted to, and Stuart was again tempted to try a raid round our army. It is true that he accomplished very little beside the ruin of his own horses. He was like the wind and a frolic which did great damage to "old women's bonnets and ginger bread stalls," but he did not much affect the prospects of the war, and did not drive the northern army from the field. The ignominy however was none the less on this account when we discover that no cavalry could be concentrated to intercept him. On the whole though the mounted troops must have raised themselves a fig, in this campaign for we find General McClellan unable to move across the Potomac for want of them, and it is a fact that they were in a very bad way just then, by reason of a terrible disease of the hoof which affected the horses, a disease brought about by

bad feeding, turnpike dust, overheating, mud and many other causes, perhaps guessed at by everybody, but the malady was remedied by none until it had run its course.

After crossing the Potomac the Cavalry under Generals Pleasonton and Averell, took the advance very creditably, always encountering the enemy's cavalry successfully and never calling on our infantry for support. At Fredericksburg there was very little use for horsemen and very few crossed the Rappahannock during the engagement. General Bayard made a reconnaissance with his brigade, on the plain where Franklin was on the left, but he could do no good where the enemy could see his every movement and he could see no enemy and after this gallant young general was killed, the brigade was withdrawn to the north bank of the river.<sup>4</sup>

After Fredericksburg General Hooker lifted the Cavalry over the stile by consolidating it. A Cavalry Corps was formed and General Stoneman was assigned to the command and then for the first time it was realized what a capital mounted force there was. Superb regiments seemed to creep out of every defile within the lines of the army.

Three divisions were organized under Generals Pleasonton, Averell and Gregg and General Buford commanded the brigade of regulars. When President Lincoln came down to the army for a grand review, nobody was more astonished than the troops themselves, when they saw the face of the country swarm with cavalry, and apparently an endless stream of horsemen pouring from every avenue leading to the parade ground. The enemy regarding the magnificent array from Marye's Heights across the river, must have felt a slight reaction from the glow of Fredericksburg, seeing that the Yankee's were not all dead yet.<sup>5</sup>

Averell's division made a very handsome dash across Kelly's Ford on St. Patrick's Day, and then came Stoneman's Raid and Chancellorsville. Success at the great battle was necessary for Stoneman's success; failure at the battle rendered Stoneman's best efforts futile: for he was dispatched to the rear of Lee to annoy him as he retreated to destroy his communications, to block up the roads, to get between the beaten enemy and his capital and in the words of the orders given to General Stoneman to "fight, fight, fight." Cutting loose from the army he followed his instructions as well as he could, but the other program as laid down was not entirely executed owing to unforeseen circumstances, and in a week or more General

Stoneman found himself many miles from his friends, and could get no tidings of the defeated enemy. Then he had to get back the best way he could in the most drenching weather and over the most frightful roads. On his safe return, patriotic efforts were made to cheer up the desponding people with glowing stories of his achievements. The illustrated papers had him depicted on a fiery charger, with his scabbard on the wrong side, pointing with his sword at miles of railroad bridges enrapped in flames and correspondents exhausted in imagination (or evolved out of their inner consciousness as the modern phrase is) in describing the ruin he had scattered broad cast. Shrewd Mr. Lincoln however saw that the raid was not a crushing blow to the rebellion, and he had his little joke over it, sadly enough, no doubt though it is probable that he did not comprehend how fatal to the success of Stoneman had been the failure at Chancellorsville. In that battle General Pleasonton did excellent execution with his command.

At a critical moment when Jackson had stampeded the 11th Corps and was carrying everything before him, Pleasonton's cavalry stood fast and catching up some flying artillery, opposed a front before which Jackson halted and afterward met his death.

After Chancellorsville there was a good deal of bad blood in military quarters, great promises had been followed by but small fulfillment and scapegoats were needed on whom to foster blunders. General's Stoneman and Averell figured in that capacity and General Pleasonton succeeded to the command of the Cavalry Corps. At this time it was known that Stuart was getting ready his cavalry for a great raid into Pennsylvania and his camp near Brandy Station was busy with preparation. General Pleasonton on the 9th of June 1863 went across the Rappahannock to look for a fight in which to cripple the enemy's horse and send them into hospital for repairs. This was successfully accomplished from daylight to sunset, the championship was hotly contested by the rival troopers and our men won the belt and held it against all comers from that time. The seeker for disabled cavalry men could have found one thousand one hundred killed and wounded of ours on that stricken plain.<sup>6</sup> Stuart staggered under the shock and thereby failed in his whole campaign, for he was so late in starting that we got across his path at Aldie when he was bound for the Potomac at Edward's Ferry ten days later, and General Pleasonton pressed him back to Middleburg and drove him through Upperville to Ashby's Gap, a



glorious series of engagements for our cavalry, and we bottled him up in the Valley until we had no object in keeping him there any longer.<sup>7</sup>

When he got out he was much too late to do any harm as we had got over the Potomac first and General Lee's report of the Gettysburg Campaign proves how useless to him was his mounted force. At Frederick City the cavalry that had been in the Defenses of Washington under General Stahel joined the Army of the Potomac, and thenceforth was known as the 3rd Division of the Cavalry Corps and was put under General Kilpatrick with Custer and Farnsworth as brigade commanders.<sup>8</sup> Kilpatrick made a fair division commander and although he acquired the sobriquet of "Kill Cavalry" he claimed to prove by figures at the Officers's meeting at the time he left the Army of the Potomac, that he had more men mounted in his division and lost less horses than in either of the others. But for brave and gallant soldiers, few ever equaled and none excelled the two brigade commanders, Farnsworth and Custer. Of Farnsworth, Swinton in his *History of the Army of the Potomac* says "I cannot forbear to mention the very spirited attack on Hood's right by the brigades of Farnsworth and Merritt operating on the left flank of the army. Farnsworth with the First Vermont and First Virginia Cavalry cleared a fence in his front, sabred the enemy behind it and then rushed on the second line and up to the muzzle of the guns where most of them fell, and their gallant leader at their head."<sup>9</sup>

Custer, the "Chevalier Bayard" of the army without fear and without reproach, was the ideal of a Soldier, and he asked no man to go where he was not willing to lead. At Hanover, Pennsylvania we ran foul of Stuart, or rather he did of our rear guard, and we had a handsome little fight while Buford with his command in advance of Reynold's Corps opened the ball at Gettysburg, and is entitled to the highest praise for his very distinguished services on that occasion.<sup>10</sup> During the great battle of the two succeeding days the Cavalry at both flanks fought hard. Gregg on the right repulsing Stuart's fierce assault, made with the hope of reaching our rear, and Kilpatrick and Merritt on the left, charging the enemy's infantry, and keeping a large force busy there.

After the battle there were raids on the wagon trains, and dashes at the rebel rear guard. The Cavalry was now an acknowledged element, and there never was any trouble in finding enough to do and the mounted men

were beginning to earn their rations, and enjoy a night's rest when they could get it.

They could hold up their heads among their fellow soldiers of the other arms of the service, for they now swept the roads clear for the infantry march, and only drew off to the flanks when general engagements were to the fore, and then kept their three inch rifled guns, and their carbines rattling away against the ribs of the enemy's lines, getting their own saddles emptied, and filling the fields with dead and wounded enough to satisfy any one. It is not necessary to follow them through the brilliant encounters of the fall in Culpeper County when the Harris Light Cavalry captured the guns by a charge on their flank, while we were in front and received their fire and how the other gun stopped too long and was chased through the town and was captured by the 1st Vermont.<sup>11</sup> Then on the retreat to Centerville and back again Lee tried to swap Queens in his game of chess, and Mine Run, and through the hard picketing of the cold and wet winter when they did an amount of work, that nobody can appreciate by a home fireside. In the early spring came Kilpatrick's raid to Richmond, in the return by way of Yorktown and Alexandria. Then General Pleasonton was relieved of his command, together with the other generals of the Army of the Potomac who were supposed not to pull kindly with General Meade, and General Sheridan assumed command of the Cavalry Corps. Kilpatrick went west to report to Sherman, and was succeeded by General Wilson. The brave and brilliant General Buford had died in the fall and many other gallant officers had given up their lives at the head of their commands. General Torbert now commanded the First Division and General Gregg still retained the Second. General Sheridan immediately brought the Cavalry into still greater favor by his engagements in the Wilderness and fighting raid to the James River, in which General Stuart was killed at Yellow Tavern. Some of the best contested battles of the war followed his return, Gregg at Haw's Shop and Torbert at Cold Harbor, winning the admiration of the army, while General Wilson's command acquired the title of the Sandwich Division. Then came the long ride to Trevilian Station and back, and the sharp fighting there. Wilson's Raid toward Danville was a failure in some respects, but General Grant says that the damage inflicted on the enemy's railroads compensated for his own losses. At Deep Bottom on the James, the Cavalry achieved a great success, fighting infantry as at Cold Harbor and all this time most of the engagements had been fought dismounted.<sup>12</sup>

"Prepare to fight on foot" was the usual order after a little skirmishing had developed the enemy, and the horses hardly knew anything of the battle, while their riders were following the flag through swamps and brakes and virgin forest, not legitimate work for mounted troops perhaps.

Then came the campaign in the Shenandoah Valley in which the Cavalry won laurels that will never fade. The 3rd Division under the lead of Custer became the best cavalry organization in the army, or as Joe Hooker would say, "on the planet" and fulfilled Custer's boast that it captured every gun that the enemy dared open upon it.

Now the troopers were spoken of always with respect, often with admiration. They had shown themselves the peers of the best of the infantry, side by side with them on hard fought fields.

The artillery asked no better support.

They had been tried in every phase of warfare and never been found wanting. Their depleted ranks had been filled with the best of volunteers, drafted men being seldom put into the Cavalry, and the new men fell quickly into the old men's ways, and boldly followed their file leaders into battle.

The whole Corps was animated by the best spirit, anxious for victory, and willing to go through anything to secure it, self reliant and believing in their commanders they expected success, and would not be denied whenever it was possible.

In the Spring of 1865 came Sheridan's grand march from Winchester to Petersburg. Cutting loose from all communication on the 27th of February, General Sheridan at the head of his magnificent column of 6,000 troops, little caring for anything that might lie in his path. At Waynesboro Custer's division gobbled up the remnants of Jubal Early's army, and the old gentleman himself escaped on horseback over the Blue Ridge almost alone and chased by our advance guard.

We halted at Charlottesville for two days to enable the wagons to come up, while we amused ourselves in tearing up the railroad and then started for Lynchburg burning bridges and so forth. Arriving at the James River we found the bridges gone and our pontoon bridge too short, so we

could not follow out our orders to cross the river and join Sherman—so instead of going back we kept down the river, breaking the canal and making a detour up through Ashland, and arrived at the White House on the 19th of March, having marched a greater number of miles in the enemy's country than Sherman did in his famous "March to the Sea," having captured more men, more horses, more Negroes, more colors, more pieces of field artillery, with less loss and in less time, and with less than one tenth as many men as he had, and less than one hundredth part as much newspaper glory.

After leaving a thousand horses lame with the foot rot, we marched across the Peninsula and the pontoon bridge to Bermuda Hundred and so on to Hancock Station. The circle of the hunt was now completed. The leashed dogs of war lay stretched from Newmarket north of the James to Hatcher's Run, a distance of more than thirty miles, ready to spring, whenever the meditative soldier who sat silent in his little hut at City Point should sound the "laissez aller."

In the last days of March we broke camp and moved around to the right flank of the enemy. At the crossing of Rowanty Creek all that crossed were counted and found to number 9,000 mounted men, 3,500 in Crook's 2nd Division and 5,500 in the other two, being the force that came through from Winchester. We all remember how while Crook and Devin engaged the enemy at Dinwiddie, we lugged at the wagon train and by means of corduroying, lifting, whipping and some swearing, we got the wagons along part way and then were summoned to the assistance of the other divisions which had been up to Five Forks and back again and were glad to see us. Then came the gallop to Five Forks, again accompanied by the news boy with his account of the fight at Fort Steadman. Then the halt till the 5th Corps of infantry could flank them, and then the charge in front, on breastworks of timber by the Cavalry, and the long chase after the retreating enemy till after dark and we were recalled by Custer's Bugle.

Then came the fight at Namozine Church and the night march, and we found ourselves at Jetersville, across Lee's route of retreat while he was at Amelia Court House with trains of cars filled with records of the Rebel War Office, instead of the one million rations that had been burned up in that city by order of General Ewell. That night Lee advanced to Amelia, and doubling up his trains of horses and mules, abandoned and burned his

caissons and forges. I counted next day the irons of 95 different vehicles, mostly caissons.

By reason of this detour we were not with the advance of the Cavalry Corps, who were winning honors at Sailors Creek. The dead lay strewn like autumn leaves that night on the further bank of that fated stream, and as we passed through care had to be exercised to prevent stepping on the dead bodies of men gone to that goal from which no traveler returned. The dead were here virtually piled one upon another and it was the "last ditch" for thousands. Next morning General Custer was riding around followed by twenty-nine men carrying twenty-nine Rebel Battle Flags captured the day previous. Then came the long ride through Prince Edward Court House to Appomattox Station. Those were glorious times. The weather was fine. The troops had confidence in each other and in their commanders. The country was new to us, unstained by war. The brigade that had the advance one day would halt in the morning till the others passed, so as to take its place in the rear and while the command was passing would have out the band to enliven the march with martial music.<sup>13</sup>

During the evening of the 8th the regiment arrived at Appomattox Station where the enemy's reserve artillery and ammunition trains were found. A portion of Colonel Wells's brigade was at once dismounted and sent through the woods to take the enemy in the flank, while the First Vermont charged them in front. The batteries opened a brisk fire but were soon defeated with the loss of thirty guns and a large wagon train. Eighteen of the guns were taken by Wells's brigade, of which number the First Vermont captured eight. Among the captured guns were those of the famous Washington Artillery of New Orleans, which had long boasted of never having lost a gun.

On the morning of the memorable 9th of April, the regiment had the advance of the Second Brigade, which moved rapidly forward, forcing back the enemy's skirmish line. Moving to the right to uncover the Fifth Corps it passed along nearly the entire front of the enemy's line under the fire of two batteries, and came upon the rebel flank and rear in full view of the supply trains. Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Hall was ordered to charge the train with the First Vermont, and the first battalion had broken into a gallop when word was received that General Lee had sent in a flag of truce, offering to surrender his army, but before the regiment could be

halted it had captured the last line between it and the train, which in a few minutes more would have been added to its long list of captures.

Sabers were returned never to be drawn again in the fury of battle, and the surrender having been completed, the regiment went into camp near the scene of its last charge. On the following day the regiment started for Petersburg where it arrived on the 19th.

During its three years of active service in the presence of the enemy, the regiment captured in open field three battle flags, thirty-nine pieces of artillery, and more prisoners than it had men—a record which, it is believed, was not excelled by any regiment in the Union service.

# **HISTORY OF THE FIRST VERMONT CAVALRY VOLUNTEERS IN THE WAR OF THE GREAT REBELLION**

Organization and Mustering at Burlington, Vermont on the 19th of November 1861 till its final mustering out at Burlington on the 9th of August 1865

During which time it participated in 72 Battles besides numerous skirmishes not counted, captured 1,000 Prisoners, 39 Cannon, 3 Battle Flags, 62 Wagons and 1000 Horses.

Railroad bridges burned: 12

Miles of railroad destroyed: 10

Contrabands brought in: 500

Horses used in all: 5,000

Miles marched by regimental headquarters: 4,000

Value of property destroyed more than \$1,000,000

## CHAPTER ONE

### Organization at Burlington and Journey to the Front

When the Rebellion broke out in April 1861, it found Vermont not very well provided with means to aid the Federal government in maintaining its authority over the seceded states. It is true that we had a few Independent Companies, variously uniformed, and under no obligation to go out of the state, so it was not though advisable to depend on them, and when the call for 780 men was received, new men were enlisted and went into camp at Rutland. From here they soon went to Newport News, Virginia under command of Colonel Stephen Phelps and there remained till the expiration of their term of service, three months, taking part in the Battle of Big Bethel.<sup>1</sup> Erastus Fairbanks of St. Johnsbury was then governor<sup>2</sup> and he immediately proceeded with great energy to take needful measures to enable Vermont to do its share of the great work, ably assisted by his Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, Colonel Merrill and other state officials. A Proclamation was issued calling the Legislature together, which met at the time appointed. Laws were passed authorizing the proper officer to enlist, if necessary, six regiments or infantry to serve for two years. This was changed to three years at the desire of the Federal government. The men were to receive \$ 7.00 per month in addition to the regular pay, which was one of the best laws that ever was on the statute book, as in this way everyone was paid in proportion to the time served and did not admit of Bounty Jumping, which was practiced so much later in the War. Under the provision of this act, the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Regiments were raised and formed the celebrated Vermont Brigade, than which there was none better, if any quite as good. About this time, as the Weather Prophets say, a Cavalry Regiment began to be spoken of, and application was made to the Governor for authority to raise one, but it is understood that he was apposed to the scheme on the ground that the Act gave him no authority to raise Cavalry (only Infantry) and also on the grounds of the great expense.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, Mr. Lemuel Platt, a physician of Colchester, visited Washington and obtained authority direct from the War Department to raise and organize a cavalry regiments of ten companies of 101 enlisted men and 3 officers each, and was commissioned colonel.<sup>4</sup>



Returning home, he appointed recruiting officers in different parts of the state to the number of 10 or more. Company A was recruited in Chittenden County, headquarters at Burlington, and was mustered in on the 11th day of October, 1861 at Burlington by Lieutenant Jones of the Regular Army. It was organized and elected the following officers: Captain Frank B. Platt, the colonel's son, First Lieutenant Joel B. Erhardt and Second Lieutenant Ellis B. Edwards.<sup>5</sup>

Company B was enlisted mostly in Franklin County, headquarters at St. Albans and was mustered in October 12, 1861 by Lieutenant Jones and organized by choosing for captain George P. Conger, First Lieutenant William Beeman, and Second Lieutenant Jed P. Clark.<sup>6</sup> Company C was raised in Washington County, headquarters at Montpelier and elected for officers on the 7th day of October 1861 as follows: for Captain John D. Bartlett, First Lieutenant William Wells, and Second Lieutenant Henry M. Paige.<sup>7</sup>

Company D was recruited in Orange, Caledonia and Essex Counties by A.D. Hibbard and Addison W. Preston. It was organized at Chelsea on the 15th day of October by choosing A.W. Preston for captain, J.W. Bennett for first lieutenant and William G. Cummings for second lieutenant.<sup>8</sup> Mr. Hibbard not getting the position that he wanted, his health failed and he remained at home.

Company E was raised in Windsor County and organized by choosing for captain Samuel P. Rundlett, First Lieutenant Andrew J. Grover, and for second lieutenant John C. Holmes.<sup>9</sup> Company F was recruited in Windham County by George B. Kellogg, headquarters at Brattleboro and was mustered in there and organized by electing for captain Josiah Hall, for first lieutenant Robert Schofield and for second lieutenant Nathaniel E. Haywood. It is to be noted that before this Colonel Platt had appointed George B. Kellogg as lieutenant colonel of the regiment.<sup>10</sup>

Company G was raised in Bennington County and was organized by electing as captain William D. Collins, for first lieutenant James A. Sheldon, and for second lieutenant George H. Bean.<sup>11</sup> Company H organized in Rutland County, with Dr. Selah G. Perkins of Castleton Medical College as captain, Franklin T. Huntoon of Rutland as first lieutenant, and Charles A. Adams of Wallingford as second lieutenant.<sup>12</sup> Company I from Lamoille County organized at Hyde Park in October as follows:

Captain Edward B. Sawyer, First Lieutenant Henry C. Flint and Second Lieutenant Josiah Grout, Jr.<sup>13</sup> Company K from Addison County elected the following officers: for captain Franklin Moore, first lieutenant John S. Ward, and second lieutenant John Williamson.<sup>14</sup>

The men were all enlisted for three years or "during the war" and then receive the \$7.00 per month from the state for 2 years and longer if the state voted it to them, which it did at the next session of the legislature. The regiment was recruited in a very short time, none being enlisted previous to September 8th and it went into camp at Burlington on the Fair Ground about October 9th, some of the companies arriving a few days before the others. Board shanties were erected for our accomodation previous to our receiving Sibley tents which arrived in a few days, and were pitched in rows of three each and two rows (six tents) to each company. The ends of the rows forming the arc of a circle. The officers' tents were north of the Sibleys and near by. Soon after our arrival an election was held by the officers to choose majors, which resulted in the choice of William D. Collins of Company G for first major and John D. Bartlett of Company C for second major. In the organization of the regiment the men elected the line officers and ratified the nomination of the commissioned officers. The line officers elected some of the field and staff and its lists were appointed by the colonel and commissioned by the governor. But we found that after this the men had but little to say about it. The appointing of the non-commissioned officers on recommendation of the company commander and accordingly who he pleased for commissioned officers, and the governor generally ratified the appointments, but not always, as you will find out farther along. The organization was completed by the appointment of Edgar Pitkin as adjutant, of A.S. Dewey as quartermaster, George S. Gale as surgeon, P. O'Meara Edson assistant surgeon, John H. Woodward as chaplain, A.H. Danforth sergeant major, C.V.H. Sabin quartermaster sergeant, Mark Wooster commissary sergeant, Joel Fisk hospital steward, Cyrus Green and F.A. Prouty as chief buglars, and Hosea Stone as veterinary surgeon.<sup>15</sup>

We received our uniforms in a few days after our arrival at Burlington and before we left drew our sabres, which were the only arms we received in the state. Horses began to come in for which the government paid \$125, but it is said that the colonel made a good thing of it as he did not pay near as much for them. They were sorted out according to color, so the horses of each company were all nearly the same shade. They were assigned as

follows: Company A brown, Companies B, D and F bay, Company G gray, Company H sorrel, Company E chestnut and Companies I and K, black. During our field service it was not found practical to keep up this distinction.<sup>16</sup> The men and horses were drawn up in line and each man took his horse according to the position he held in the line. After this they were allowed to swap some, but the practice was generally discouraged. In some companies the non-commissioned officers were allowed to choose before hand. Mr. Samuel S. Drew had the contract to feed the men and horses.

We took our meals in the Mechanic's Hall near the gate and were fed very well, although we found a great deal of fault at the time. The Articles of War were read to us one Sunday evening by Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg according to the Regulations. Camp Guards were established and guard mounting according to the Tactics. For a week or two the drilling was on foot, but after we received our horses we had mounted drill in the forenoon and dismounted drill in the afternoon. The officers occasionally had drill of their own., which they no doubt needed, as the only person in the regiment who was then supposed to know anything about military matters was Major Collins, and he was understood to have been a corporal in the English service. His career in this regiment would not seem to indicate that his previous service was of much benefit to him.<sup>17</sup>

Occasionally a man got drunk and was put in the guard house beside the gate and one evening there was considerable excitement in camp on account of the farrier of Company A getting his nose smashed, supposed to have been done by one of Company F.<sup>18</sup> The next day the Company (F) was drawn up in line and the injured person passed along the line and picked out the man (James Ellis)<sup>19</sup> that he thought was the one that struck him, but Ellis proved that he was in his tent at the time, so the man wanted to pick again, but Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg decided that if he had made a mistake once, his observation was not to be relieved on.

Recruits continued to come in, especially quite a number to Company D who were obtained by Lieutenant Cummings in Caledonia and Essex counties. Furloughs were granted in November to most of the men for a few days, including the writer, H.K. Ide, then of Company F. I took the cars to Montpelier in company with L.C. Richardson and from there to Passumpsic with teams.<sup>20</sup> When we went back, Loren Brigham accompanied us by team to Montpelier and George Ryan went by teams from St.

Johnsbury and we all went on from Montpelier except Richardson, who got left and came on the next day.<sup>21</sup>

There was some sickness occasioned by the change from good beds to sleeping on the ground. One young man by the name of J.N. Smith died from measles on November 24th in the house west of the camp ground which was used as a hospital.<sup>22</sup>

On the 19th day of November we were formally mustered in to the United States service, and our three years' term was supposed to begin then. The whole number of officers and enlisted men mustered in was 966.

We began to hear camp rumors that we were going to the front or that we were to stay in Vermont all winter et cetera ad infinitum. On the 13th day of December we received orders to get ready to move the next day and we were up in the morning before daylight packing up and getting ready to move. The writer had been promoted to corporal and transferred to Company D on the day we moved in place of William Pierce transferred to Company F as buglar.<sup>23</sup> In Company D I took the place of H.M. Farnsworth who was sick in hospital, but he was not discharged till January 6th, 1863.<sup>24</sup> We had previously received some pay from the state, \$21 I believe. Early on the morning of December 14th we marched to the cars of the Rutland and Burlington Railroad on Water Street and loaded up. Eight horses were put into a car, four in each end, a bar put across, and the eight men with their equipments and some forage occupied the center of the car. The people of Burlington turned out in considerable number to see us off and as a general thing we were well satisfied with our treatment by them, so much so that when we returned, a request was prepared that we might go to Burlington to be mustered out in June 1865. At Brattleboro testimony was directly the reverse of this.<sup>25</sup>

On the route there was considerable waving of handkerchiefs and harrahing, especially at Troy, New York, when we passed there in the evening.<sup>26</sup> We arrived in New York City before daylight Sunday morning and unloaded in the street along 9th Avenue and were taken to an old building on the 23rd Street (I think) near East River, where we remained all day. We were visited by several citizens, both ladies and gentlemen, who seemed interested in us, but evidently labored under the impression that we were backwoodsmen. Some of us not liking our quarters moved to the stables where our horses were and slept on the hay. I went to Mr. Pierce's

office in the evening with Mr. Langdon Kendall and when we came back the Company (D) had moved to the stable.

Monday morning we saddled up and marched down Broadway to the Battery, Colonel Howe and several Vermonters accompanying us. Major Collins was very conspicuous and while galloping up and down the column to give some necessary order, his horse slipped upon the pavement and somewhat bruised the major so that he had to be carried into a drug store and revived.

After marching around the Battery grounds and after the people of New York had seen us all they wanted to, we crossed the ferry to Jersey City and after waiting there some time, we marched to Elizabethport, a distance of about 20 miles, passing through Newark and Elizabeth City. The road was quite dusty and the business being new it was quite a hard day's work for many. In the first part of the night we loaded our horses into freight cars (17 or 18 to each car) and the men went into passenger cars separate from the horses, which was not as good a way as that which we came from Burlington was, as the results showed.

The trains of freight and passenger cars were not together, so that a great many of the horses were not watered or fed on the road and after we arrived at Washington about fifty of them died, mostly of lung fever. We passed through Reading and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and came into Baltimore from the north and were drawn through that city by horses. We stopped here long enough to visit the place where the mob assailed the Massachusetts 6th in April and talk with the citizens, who we were astonished to find were not all Secessionists thirsting for our hearts blood. We were very careful to keep together 2 or 3 in a place for fear of being murdered, and I found out that the men coming out a year after were just the same when no doubt before this a large share of the fighting Rebels had joined the Confederate Army. I have no doubt but that Baltimore was as safe a place for our soldiers as New York, especially when we recall the scene in the latter city in July 1863.

Between Baltimore and Washington we saw the pickets along the railroad and the Massachusetts battery at the Relay House, guarding the viaduct. We arrived in Washington early Thursday morning December 18th and unloaded our horses and went into camp in an old graveyard, about half a mile out from the Depot at the side of the railroad. The tents were

not pitched in any regular order and the mud was knee deep and all together we were a disconsolate looking set of human beings. Some passes were given to go to the City and some went without any, including myself.

We visited the Capitol and some other places of interest, but took care to keep out of the way of the Provost Guard. We remained in this camp about a week and on the morning of the 24th of December we took up the line of march to Annapolis by way of Upper Marlborough, to go into camp there and drill for the winter. The distance was about 40 miles and we were two days on the road. The first night out we camped near Marlborough. A great many caught cold here as we did not have our tents, but bivouacked in the woods, which was our first trial in that direction and the weather was quite cool. The next morning we resumed the march and arrived at our camping ground about dark. In the morning we got some hay for the horses and those that came by cars from Washington joined us.

## CHAPTER TWO

### From Annapolis to the Shenandoah Valley

We found that a large body of infantry were camped near us, the Burnside Expedition that sailed to Hatteras in a few days (or week) and won the victories on Roanoke Island. Also one battalion of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, which soon left for Hilton Head<sup>1</sup> and the 5th New York Cavalry, which had been there some time. We went into camp south of west from the city, about two miles distant and just beyond the 5th New York, or Ira Harris Cavalry.<sup>2</sup> We pitched our tents in the regulation order: six tents to each company in a line and company street between the tents and the sheds for the horses, which were erected soon after. For the time being we hitched them in the woods and had a guard for each company's horses, besides the Regimental Guard. The officers' tents at the south end of the row of Sibley tents on the same line and the cook houses at the other end of the camp. South of the line officers' tents the Field and Staff had theirs. Opposite Company D near the officers' tents was a cedar tree. By the 1st of January 1862 we had got pretty well established and began on improvements. We built barracks for the horses with a long roof slanting towards the right of the line and a short slant on the other side which was open towards the company street. About the 6th of January we "stockaded" our tents by setting them on the ends of slabs split from oak and chestnut, set in the ground in a circle the size of the tent and projecting above the ground about 3 feet. About the 11th we floored the tents with boards furnished by the government. Company I also dug a well.

We had considerable trouble to get water for both horses and men. A detail was made to build a dam down in the woods, but after it as done it had to be made over again. Most of the water for cooking was brought from the well of the house that the owner of the plantation lived in.

We now began to drill pretty regular, generally mounted drill in the morning and dismounted in the afternoon. On the 17th we were formed into a brigade in connection with the 5th New York Cavalry, General John P. Hatch<sup>3</sup> commanding and brigade guard established around the whole camp with a detail of one officer and about 50 men from each regiment. The men went on guard mounted and when not on post remained at the guard house, being as near as possible like picket duty of which we had

plenty before the war ended. The 24th of January we received our pay to the 1st, but found considerable trouble in spending it as the bills were generally large. The Jews were around in large numbers to dispose of their goods at twice their value, but I believe a large share of the money was sent to Vermont. About this time the "Pipe" fever broke out. The whole regiment seemed to be seized with the idea that they must do nothing but manufacture pipes and whole mulberry trees were used up, and the woods dug for laurel roots to supply the material beside some cedar. Boys that never thought of the thing before had to engage in the manufacture of the article and when it was finished of course they had to use them. The mulberry seemed to be the best material as it was of a dark color and would take on quite a handsome polish and some very handsome pipes were made, especially those that were silver-mounted, which branch some entered into as that article had not entirely disappeared then.

A court martial was established at brigade headquarters for the trial of men who had committed minor offenses. About February 1st Lieutenant John Bennett of Company D was appointed aide-de-camp on General Hatch's staff and with him was associated Lieutenant Lyon of the 5th New York, who for a time was Acting Assistant Adjutant General, but Captain Judson was afterwards appointed to the position of Assistant Adjutant General of Volunteers and assigned to our brigade. Sunday mornings we generally had inspection both of the men and quarters. Colonel Platt did not have much to do with the government of the regiment and we soon found out that Adjutant Pitkin and Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg ran the machine. On February 14th the regiment was all out mounted and marched some distance from the camp, formed into a hollow square and gave three cheers for Burnside and his men who had just gained the victory at Roanoke Island. We were commanded by Colonel Platt in person today, which was about the first and last time he ever undertook it, as he soon after resigned and was succeeded by Colonel Jonas P. Holliday, was a captain in the 2nd United States Cavalry.<sup>4</sup> He was a tall, slim person, straight as an arrow and rather grave in his demeanor. Colonel Platt used to come around and talk with us, saying that he could feed and clothe us as well as anyone, but he did not think he would make much of a warrior to lead us in action and we all coincided with him.

Just before this the carbines and pistols arrived: 10 Sharpes carbines for each company and a Savage revolver for each man. These revolvers were rightly named, as they were cocked by pulling the trigger and I have



no doubt but that more of our own men were shot by them accidentally than Rebels.

Our regiment was not complete, it required 12 companies to make a full regiment of cavalry with three battalions of four companies each, commanded by three majors. We had but ten companies so that the duties of our two majors were not clearly defined. We had been sub-divided into squadrons as follows: companies A and B 1st Squadron, C and D 2nd Squadron, and so on through the regiment. About the time Colonel Holiday took command it was rearranged as follows: A and G 1st Squadron, Captain Frank Platt commanding, B and H 2nd Squadron, Captain George Conger commanding, D and I 3rd Squadron, Captain Addison Preston commanding, F and C 4th Squadron, Captain Josiah Hall commanding, and E and K 5th Squadron, Captain Samuel Rundlett commanding.

We were very saving of the fences of the citizens, getting our fire wood from the woods, but when I was there next year I noticed they were all gone, and before our time was out we were not so tender of hurting the feelings or pockets of the citizens. There was a rumor that some of Company H, while drunk, had nearly killed the owner of a house nearby, but I was never able to learn the truth of the story.

One day the water from the well at the plantation house was of a very curious color and the citizens were accused of poisoning it, but it was finally decided that it arose from our men washing clothes near it and pouring out the water so that it ran back into the well, the soap suds making the light color complained of.

A detail was ordered to go to Vermont and recruit, but was countermanded. The 12th of February the "D'Epineuil Zouaves" arrived in the harbor. It was reported that there was such a lack of discipline in the regiment that they were to be disbanded, which was afterwards done and those that would not enlist in other regiments were discharged.<sup>5</sup>

A regimental band was organized with Rufus E. Whitcomb of Company D for leader, but it didn't survive the first campaign.<sup>6</sup> On February 24th the wind blew very hard filling the air full of sand and nearly blowing the tents down.

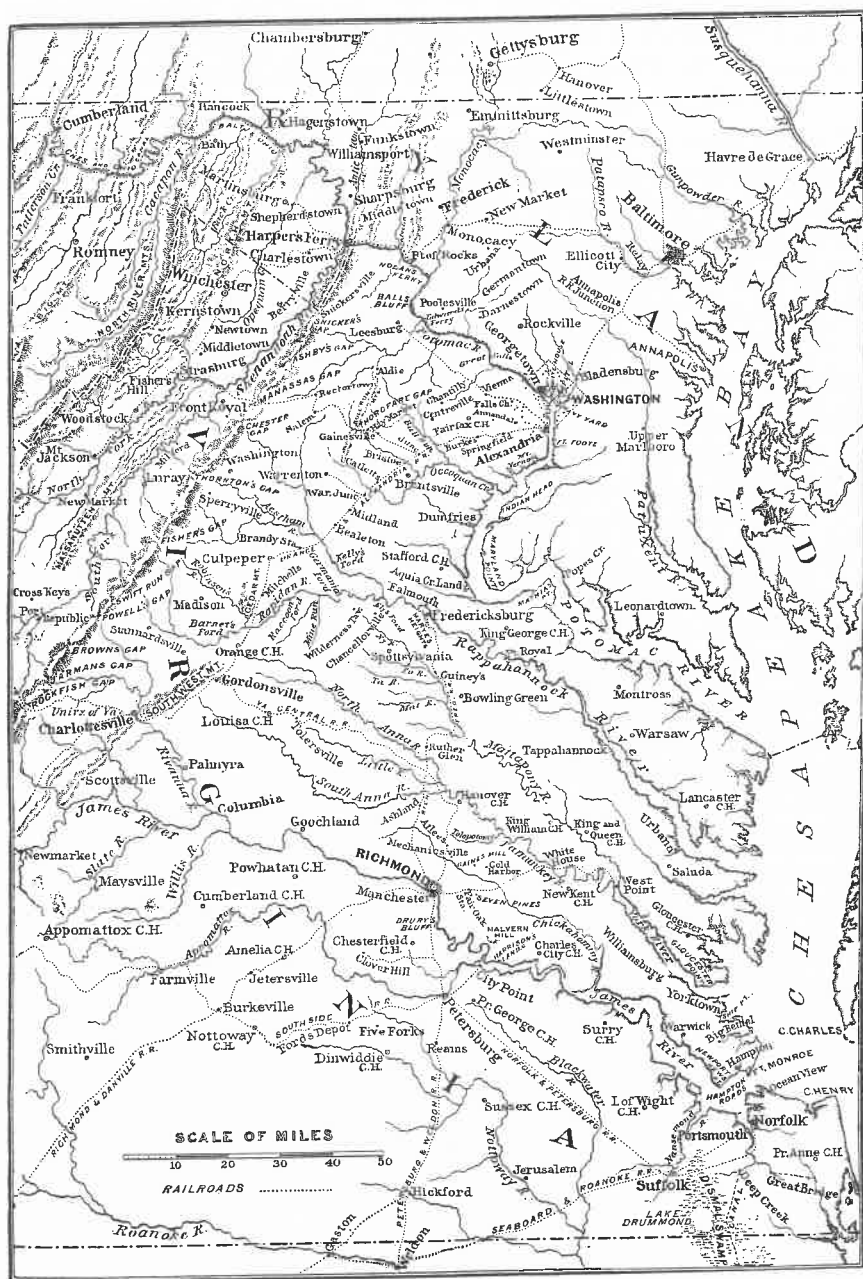
On the 25th, while returning from drill and jumping a fence, my horse stumbled and fell on to me, bruising my head, so that inflammation of the eyes resulted and I went to regimental hospital on March 7th. The next day all the sick were carried to the Navy Yard Hospital, including myself. The regiment was ordered to move and I remained in the hospital till the 8th of April, during which time my eyes were worse, but finally got better by being treated with nitrate of silver, blisters, etcetera. Quite a number of the regiment who were sent there were discharged, but on the 8th of April I left there for Washington in company with Stephen Clark of Company F, being thought fit for duty, although my eyes were weak.<sup>7</sup>

While I was at Annapolis, the famous fight in Hampton Roads occurred between the Monitor and Merrimac (or Virginia) and the harbor at Annapolis was full of vessels that were trying to get out of the reach of the supposed invincible Merrimac, but on March 9th they left for Baltimore.

On April 8th we went to Washington and remained there two days and were present in the Senate Gallery when the news from the Battle of Shiloh was received and in the House when the vote on Emancipation in the District of Columbia was passed. On the 10th we started for Harper's Ferry by way of the Relay House, arrived there about 2 P.M. and after getting passes from the Provost Marshal, took the train for Winchester. After getting as far as Halltown the train stopped all night and arrived in Winchester in the afternoon. On the next day we got passes of the Provost Marshal, but no transportation, and started afoot to find the regiment.

We proceeded up the Valley of the Shenandoah past the battlefield of Kernstown and about 9 P.M. went into a deserted house in Newtown and stayed all night. In the morning we started on, but made slow progress as Sergeant Clark was suffering from rheumatism, but at Cedar Creek met Clark P. Stone<sup>8</sup> with the wagon train going to Winchester after forage and he promised to bring our baggage. Near Strasburg we found Companies C, F and I and I stayed there all night and joined the regiment at Woodstock (14 miles south) the next day when the train came back (April 15th). Companies F and I were called out while I was with them to repel an attack from a squad of Rebel Cavalry who were just across the Shenandoah at the foot of Massanutten Mountain.

But to resume the history of the regiment: on the 9th of March they left the old camp ground and marched to Washington where after remain-



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ing a few days they were ordered to report to General Nathaniel P. Banks for duty. They marched up the Potomac to the vicinity of Edward's Ferry where they remained about two weeks. Captain Preston was stationed at Poolesville with companies D and I as a sort of independent command. There was some little trouble occasioned by the men "groaning" after the reading of some orders issued by command of A.W. Preston, "Captain Commanding Squadron." Only one man would own to "groaning" and he was called a "Gentleman," the rest being cowards. They were informed by Colonel Holliday that "groaning" was an act of "Mutiny" and could not be allowed. That soldiers could "think," but they must be careful how they expressed their thoughts. Soon after they had buried the dead horses and made the place fit for human beings to stay in, they moved on and passed on to the "sacred soil" of Virginia at Harper's Ferry on the 30th day of March. Here they took the turnpike (that great highway that leads from Harper's Ferry up the Valley to Staunton) and in due course of time arrived at Strasburg where they camped on the hill north of Fisher's Hill, since more noted.

On the 3rd day of April Colonel Holliday moved the regiment out on the pike, started south and then ordered the adjutant to detail a squadron to go back to Strasburg and report to General Shields for body guards. He then rode back to the rear of the regiment, passed down the creek that flowed at the foot of Fisher's Hill to near where it empties into the Shenandoah, dismounted, placed one of the Savage revolvers to his head and blew out his brains. The adjutant, who was behind making the detail, heard the report of the pistol, and going to the spot, found his lifeless body just at the edge of the water. The remains were sent home to his friends in Oswego, New York in care of Captain Sawyer and the regiment proceeded to Woodstock and camped just this side of the town, where I joined them.

The Squadron ordered to General Shields proceeded to his head quarters, but he had ordered no such detail, so they joined the regiment. I never heard any authentic reason given for the act, but some person thought it was on account of some family troubles. Lieutenant Colonel Johnstone of the 5th New York used to assert (in a joking way) that it was entirely on account of our regimental band. Rather to endure the agony of hearing them he put an end to his life, believing that he ran no great risk "in fleeing from present ills to those we know not of." The command devolved on Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg and as Major Bartlett had resigned we had only two field officers left.<sup>9</sup>

On the 8th day of April Company D had a small skirmish with some of the enemy's cavalry at Columbia Furnace, a small place a few miles west of Woodstock, but no one on our side was injured. Just previous to this (March 23rd) General Stonewall (T.J.) Jackson had made his unfortunate move on Winchester by reason of false information conveyed to him by Rebel women, which resulted in his defeat at Kernstown, two miles southwest of Winchester, and he was now slowly retiring up the Valley by the Turnpike, followed by Banks. To fully understand all the subsequent operations a clear knowledge of the topography of the region would be indispensable. Beginning on the Potomac at Harper's Ferry the Valley extends south southwest to the James River at say near Lexington, a distance of 150 or 175 miles. The average width being about 20 miles. The Blue Ridge forms the eastern boundary nearly the whole extent, and spurs of the Alleghany Mountains on the west, called here the Little North Mountain. The Ridge was passed by several roads that followed over some low place called a gap, of which the principal ones in the order of their naming, beginning at the north: Vestal's, Gregory, Snicker's, Ashby's, Manassas, Chester, Thornton's, Swift River, Jarman's and Rock Fish Gap. At Strasburg, nearly opposite Manassas Gap, another range of mountains called the "Massanutten" began very abruptly at a distance of about 10 miles from the Blue Ridge and continuing south parallel with it for about 50 miles and ended as sudden as its beginning at a point near Harrisonburg. The valley between these two ridges is called the Luray Valley, and through this flows the South Fork of the Shenandoah River which takes its rise in Augusta County near Staunton and flows near the foot of the Blue Ridge all the way, and empties into the Potomac at Harper's Ferry where they both break through the Blue Ridge, forming that magnificent scenery which Jefferson said was worth a journey across the ocean to see. At the north end of Massanutten Mountain the Shenandoah branches, the "North Fork" of which flows on the west side of the mountains and rises in the North Mountains at Brock's Gap. This is called the main Valley and is traversed by three roads. The Turnpike beginning at Harper's Ferry and continuing through Charlestown, Berryville, Winchester, Newtown, Middletown, Strasburg, Woodstock, Mount Jackson, Edinburg, New Market, Harrisonburg and Mount Crawford to Staunton. West of these several miles were two dirt roads (as they were called, not being McAdamized like the Pike) running parallel with the Pike called the "Middle" and "Back" roads.

It will be seen that these several ridges would act as screens to hide one army from another when they were making their several flank movements, making it the best field for "Strategy" on the scene of conflict. Our forces at this time on April 14th numbered about 10,000 or 12,000 men under command of Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, including General James Shields command. We found the 1st Michigan Cavalry here and the 1st Virginia, but that regiment afterwards went with Shields. We were soon afterwards joined by the 5th New York and a battalion of the 1st Maine, which was joined together as a brigade and placed under the command of General Hatch who soon arrived.

General Banks had entered the Valley with a much larger force, but a great many had been withdrawn to go to the "Peninsula" with McClellan and had left him with too small a number to do much good, and too many to be wasted. The Confederates opposed to us were commanded by General Thomas Jonathan Jackson who had acquired considerable reputation at the First Bull Run as the commander of the "Stonewall" Brigade and was to achieve still greater honors here. His force numbered 5,000 or 6,000 men, including 1,000 cavalry under Turner Ashby. Ashby was a middle sized man with a large bushy black beard, wore a white or light gray overcoat, and will be remembered as the person who had crossed over to Point of Rocks the fall before, and rolled the hanging rock down into the canal.

On April 15th the regiment was ordered out in the afternoon to engage in a forward movement with the rest of Banks' command. The tents were left standing with the sick, camp guard, and deadbeats; in all 100 men or more. I was on camp guard, remained there two or three days till we were ordered forward to join the regiment at New Market. No engagement took place on the 15th to speak of. The infantry skirmishers at the side of the Pike and the cavalry stood "to horse" all night, expecting every minute to be ordered to charge the enemy and thus gain immortal glory. Those that were in the fight the next day were thought by the others to be fortunes favorites, as it was generally thought that the war would soon end and it would be doubtful if we should get a chance to help crush the Rebellion unless we took it now. I think before the war closed we all got as much of the fighting we wanted and did not volunteer for "forlorn hopes" very much and "it is a good soldier who does what he is ordered to do."

There was some firing during the night but not of great amount. The army had passed Edinburg and about daylight they saw the smoke arise

from the rolling stock of the Manassas Railroad that the Rebels were burning at Mount Jackson. It will be noticed that this railroad extends from Manassas Junction through Manassas Gap in the Blue Ridge, along the foot of the Massanutten range at its northern extremity to Strasburg and then turns nearly south to Mount Jackson, which was the present terminus, although it was surveyed through to Staunton and graded to Harrisonburg. The consequence was that whatever cars and engines were between Strasburg and the end of the road could be taken no farther and of course were burned, as were all the railroad bridges, several of them several hundred feet long and 75 to 100 feet high.

In the village of Mount Jackson, which our then occupied, were found several very good hospitals with some Rebel wounded in them. A mile or more beyond the place the Pike crossed the North Fork of the Shenandoah on a bridge about 125 or 150 feet long and it was important to save this, as the river could not be forded except at low water. Fording the small stream in the village called Mill Creek while the bridge was still burning, the regiment pushed on, but it is not known whether they had any orders or not. Arriving in sight of the large bridge they saw Ashby's cavalry swarming about it and the smoke rising from it. A charge was agreed upon and away they went down the Pike and through the bridge, driving the Rebels across the large meadow that lays just beyond and belongs to the estates of Reude and Stembergen. This meadow is a mile or so square and in the spring of the year is one of the grandest sights in America. Some of the Rebels were not so fortunate as to get away, being too busy setting fire to the bridge. John Chase chased two of them some distance across the plain and took the one he supposed was Ashby a prisoner, but it turned out that he got the wrong one.<sup>10</sup>

Ashby's powerful white horse was shot, but not as bad but that he carried his rider to New Market and we saw his dead body there when we came along a few days later. Lieutenant Cummings horse stumbled and threw him, as did Austin Freeman's, who caught the chap who was firing the bridge by the throat and took him prisoner.<sup>11</sup> While some of the men were following the enemy across the meadow, others brought water from the river (Darwin Wright for one<sup>12</sup>) and extinguished the fire. Ashby had a section of artillery on Rude's Hill at the further end of the meadow and shelled the bridge, but was unable to destroy it. His men also charged back once and drove our men from the bridge, but were unable to hold it and in the course of the day he withdrew to New Market. Others, un-

known to me also distinguished themselves. The only casualties reported were Captain Preston's horse (Old Dan) wounded by the rider with his own sabre.

Then a flank movement was ordered by the cavalry which proceeded along the west side of the North Fork to the neighborhood of Timberville west of New Market, but their guide did not know anything about the ford, so that they waited till morning and then forded and proceeded to New Market where they expected to come in the rear of the Rebel position at Rude's Hill, but when they arrived there they found the place evacuated by the enemy who had retreated to Harrisonburg 18 miles farther up the Valley.

Colonel David Hunter Strother, writing as Porte Crayon, recorded his impressions of the skirmish. "Pushing rapidly through the village I overtook the General and staff. On the bluffs overlooking the north fork of the Shenandoah River which here traverses the Valley from west to east. Opposite about a mile distant was Rude's Hill, its summit crowned by the enemy's guns. The bridge over this stream was saved by the activity of the Vermont Cavalry. It had been prepared for destruction, which was thought so important that Ashby had remained to superintend it in person.

At the approach of our vanguard the fagots were lighted. A squad of the First Vermont charged through fire and smoke, dispersing the enemy on the other side and capturing two men and a tall, robust officer, with black whiskers whom they took for Ashby. As the prisoners rode by, one of officers exaltingly pointed him out to me as the rebel 'Colonel.' I was sorry to be forced to throw a damper over his exaltation. Ashby is a small man, very dark with rather hard features and a heavy beard. The prisoner was a very large strong man, clear complexion and rather handsome face, like an Irishman which I believe he was. Ashby was actually present in the melee and had his horse shot. The animal had strength enough to carry his rider out of danger and then fell dead by the roadside. After this exploit the brave Vermonters turned upon the fire, which they extinguished by carrying water from the river in their horses' nose bags. Thus the bridge was saved. The aspect of this country justifies all our boastful praise. The broad meadows carpeted with velvet green and watered by crystal streams; the rock crested mountains overhanging the river, and bordering the valley on either side in long perspective ranges, vanishing in the distance in a haze of delicate blue; all combine to form a picture of marvel-



ous beauty. The General seems enraptured with the country, and continues to remark it even amidst the excitement of the pursuit. As they mount the ridge whole regiments will halt and burst spontaneously into shouts of admiration."<sup>13</sup>

New Market is situated on the Pike, about a mile from the Middle Fork and 2 miles from the North Fork and consists principally of one street along the Pike and presents the same dilapidated appearance that a great many other Southern towns do. The regiment bivouacked at the south end of the town just below the Pike and as the tents were back at Woodstock they built shanties of rails and covered them with rubber blankets.

The camp was ordered forward, and striking the tents early on the morning of the 20th of April in a severe rain storm, marched to Newmarket, under command of Lieutenant Dennis M. Blackmer of Company G,<sup>14</sup> where we arrived about 4 o'clock P.M. We found the infantry all around: some on the north side, some in town and some reading the daily papers and when we asked them what was the news? they replied that "Banks had taken New Market. We joined our regiment, but found they had but limited quarters so that some of us took to the neighboring barns for shelter. Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg sent an orderly to order any of the 1st Vermont Cavalry to the camp of the regiment, but he could find none that would claim to belong to that organization.

Captain Mann, then of the 1st Michigan Cavalry and afterwards colonel of the 7th Michigan and noted as the sole inventor of the project for a "buggy brigade," which project he seriously recommended to the government, had reported seeing a party of rebel cavalry across the Middle Fork east of New Market and on the 21st Company D was sent out to look after them, but after marching all day (25 miles) in the rain we came back without anything.<sup>15</sup>

The next day we were paid off for the months of January and February in an old cooper's shop and received some gold, but it was the last time that we received any while in the service. On the 23rd of April a party under charge of Sergeant Mitchell was sent out foraging with orders to get corn if possible, if not to take wheat.<sup>16</sup> We went west of town several miles and found considerable corn and any quantity of wheat. This, too, after the Rebel Army at Manassas had been drawing their supplies

from this region for nearly a year, shows the fertility of the soil and the great importance to the Confederates of holding this section, or at least securing the crops. The wagons were loaded and sent back, but the men did not return till Mitchell had secured a good square meal for which he was noted.

Some of us crossed over to Timberville by the ford and saw a house on fire, but it was extinguished without any great damage. We inquired particularly about bees, the value of honey, distance to New Market and so on.

A cavalry picket had been kept out towards Harrisonburg and it was reported that two of Company G had been taken prisoner by the Rebel cavalry.<sup>17</sup> On the afternoon of the 24th we saddled up and marched about 15 miles south of New Market and stopped for the night in the yard of a large house on the right of the road. We fed our horses from the wheat stack of the proprietor, and I slept on the portico of the house. We found near here a very fine looking stallion but he had a crooked leg that rendered him unfit for our service, so we left him.

The next morning we moved on in good season, passing through Harrisonburg to Mount Crawford. Here the Pike crosses the middle fork of the Shenandoah, and we found the bridge burned and the river unfordable. So we retired about two miles and went into camp for the night at a barn. While in Mount Crawford some of the men bought considerable tinware and forgot to pay for it. It was understood that General Hatch's orders were to go to Staunton, but the river prevented and I presume that it was just as well, for Jackson had turned off the Pike at Harrisonburg east and was then camped across the South Fork at the foot of the Blue Ridge near Swift Run Gap.

On the 26th we came back to Harrisonburg and camped on the hill about one quarter of a mile east of it. Towards the west and up the Valley we had a very extensive prospect over a very beautiful region.

At this time our forces in Virginia presented the strange spectacle of four armies independent of each other, and not near enough to each other to afford any assistance in case of an attack and were thus liable to be defeated in detail by a force superior to any one of them, but not nearly equal to the aggregate. The first command was that of General Charles

Fremont who was at Franklin, West Virginia in command of the Mountain Department and about 15,000 men. One of his brigades under Milroy had passed beyond the limits of the department and was threatening Staunton and seemed likely to effect a junction with Banks. The second force was Banks' command at Harrisonburg which included ourselves. The third was McDowell who had quite a large force at Fredericksburg and was then preparing to move to form a junction with McClellan near Hanover Court House and whose force (McClellan's) constituted the fourth command.

The object of the Confederate authorities was to drive back the first two armies under Fremont and Banks, raise a panic in Washington for fear of its being captured, and thus prevent the third army under McDowell from effecting a junction with the Army of the Potomac before Richmond and thus preventing that force from taking the city and virtually raising the siege. This series of operations was entrusted to General Jackson, and to enable him to do it thoroughly, General Richard Ewell at Gordonsville and General Edward Johnson, who had an independent command in southwestern Virginia, were ordered to join Jackson, which raised his force to about 20,000 men. Ewell was left at Swift Run Gap while Jackson proceeded to Staunton, and from there dispatched Johnson with five brigades to overwhelm Milroy, who discovering the large force in front of him retreated to McDowell, a small village in Pendleton County, and being joined by Schenck's brigade gave battle on May 7th. The result was a drawn battle for the time being, but it convinced Milroy that he could not hold his ground with safety, so he retired on Fremont's main body at Franklin. This movement threw Fremont out of the game for the time and Jackson now turned his attention to Banks, who had been ordered to send Shields' division to join McDowell at Fredericksburg and who had sent McCall's division to the Peninsula.

## CHAPTER THREE

### In Banks' Retreat

General Banks saw that after Shields' Division was gone (he took one half of the infantry) his force would be too small to cope with the increasing force of the enemy and had retired first to New Market on May 5th and then to Strasburg on May 13th, and had been followed to New Market by Ewell, where Jackson joined him.

But to resume the movements of our regiment. On the 27th of April General Hatch was ordered to make a reconnaissance towards the South Fork and took along about 125 men of our regiment, some of the 5th New York and two pieces of artillery. We proceeded east about 10 miles, passing around the southern end of the Massanutten Mountains with Company A as advance guard. With us also were some of the Signal Corps who went on to the mountain while we were engaged in the fight. When we had arrived near a miserable little village called McGaheysville the advance ran into some Rebel cavalry pickets and charged them without sending back any word. They chased the pickets back to the "reserve," but the Rebels swarmed out of the woods and some turned the table so that Company A was soon going the other way as fast as their horses could carry them. The Rebels came near stampeding us as we had made no preparation to receive them, but General Hatch gave the order to charge them and the men in the front of Company D remaining firm, and returning the fire in a minute the tables were turned again and away we went after them. We chased them a mile or so through the woods and down a steep hill, but our men were considerably scattered and but few came down the hill, the balance stopping at the top of the hill and watched the enemy go up the hill on the other side and disappear in the woods. One Rebel whose horse had fallen in the hollow was captured with his horse and then we retired to the top of the hill where the artillery was posted and opened fire on the gap in the woods where the enemy had disappeared. After continuing this for some time Company K was sent down the road with drawn sabres towards the enemy for a mile or two, but saw nothing and returned to the main body and we all returned to Harrisonburg.

Corporal John Chase of Company D was shot in the hip, the ball passing up into the bowels and he died the next day. The net results of the

expedition were two prisoners and horses captured, besides the information obtained, which was that the enemy was still there. Our loss was one man of Company A taken prisoner and one man (Chase) mortally wounded. The next day Chase died and we bought a metallic coffin in Harrisonburg and sent the body home. We donated our ration money which had accumulated at Annapolis to the amount of about \$70. A subscription was taken up in Company D (to which I gave one of the gold dollars that I had received at New Market) but not quite enough was raised to pay for it, and it was understood that Captain Preston was to pay the balance in a few days, but when we left it was in something of a hurry and he forgot all about it. It is to be hoped that the creditor has since concluded to donate so much to the "cause" which I am sure he had ought to do as the people of the town had already donated all their bells to the Confederate government to be cast into cannon.

Harrisonburg we found to be quite a town and seemed to be more prosperous than any other village we had seen in the Valley. It is the county seat of Rockingham County and there were several large springs nearby, one of which was in the center of the village on the west side of the square. It boiled up from the limestone rocks and was the source of quite a stream. Twelve miles from here and near Port Republic is situated Weyer's Cave, for a description of which see Town's Fourth Reader.<sup>1</sup>

On the 29th Captain Preston with four companies was sent out east and went to within a mile of McGaheysville and saw some Rebel cavalry pickets, but did not molest them as he had orders to go only so far. The next day some new clothing arrived and part was issued to the regiment, the balance was stored in the vestry of a church and I was sent with some men to guard it. Nothing occurred here of importance except that one of the citizens on the morning missed a fighting cock which he said was worth ten dollars. Quite a large body of infantry was camped around us at this time and on the evening the camp fires presented quite a pretty sight. On May 2nd we all saddled up and got ready to move, but it proved to be a false alarm. In the afternoon of the next day about two hundred made a reconnaissance towards the Shenandoah. About this time Banks became informed of Jackson's increase in numbers and on Sunday May 4th about sundown we saddled up, went up the Pike towards Mount Crawford a short distance, then returned to camp. We remained until 9 P.M. and then went on picket about five miles out on the Port Republic road, where we remained till day light. We captured a man from the enemy army who had

come near our lines to visit his folks and we passed the house and cut him off before he had a chance to get away.

Upon returning to camp we found the army was marching north as Banks was satisfied that the neighborhood was dangerous. We fed our horses, loaded our wagons, and as there was not enough to carry all the baggage or impedimenta we pressed some farm wagons into the service. It is to be noted that one great fault with our Army was the amount of baggage (or wheeled vehicles) that we encumbered ourselves with, which prevented our moving with the same celerity that the enemy did, which filled the roads and were in the way of the troops and were not necessary. To show the different systems that prevailed when the war began and when it ended I would say that on this retreat we had twenty-three wagons to our regiment and when we left Camp Russell on February 27th, 1865 we were allowed by General Sheridan's orders eight pack mules.

We were the last regiment to leave town and just as we were passing out, some wagons appeared on the hill where our camp had been. General Hatch told Lieutenant Bennett to ride ahead and start the column into a trot and asked what those wagons were, and on being told that they were some that had been sent by Colonel Kellogg to draw away some corn, he replied, "what a set of Fools" and countermanded that order about trotting.

He seemed to expect that we were to be attacked that day, and as he passed us said, "You Green Mountain Boys if we get into a brush today, don't be in too much of a hurry with your popping irons," evidently wishing us to rely more on the sabre. The Pike was very dusty and we camped about two miles from New Market. The next day (6th) we moved to New Market and camped on the old ground. We had to go some distance for forage and in the evening went out on a scout.

At this time Shields with his division and the 1st Virginia Cavalry left us to join McDowell. They had their knapsacks carried in wagons and passed out of town towards the east, down across the Middle Fork, over the Massanutten Mountain, down the Luray Valley and through Manassas Gap. At New Market the regiment was separated part of the time. Major Collins with four companies was sent over the ridge east and had quite a skirmish in connection with some Indiana infantry and the major gave some orders to his orderly about what disposition to make of his remains or effects in case he should be killed.

Some of the other companies (including D and I) were sent off to the west foraging. We secured about 60 head of cattle and three horses for which receipts were given and drove them to near Mount Jackson and stayed for the night at the plantation of a rebel captain, whose two girls seemed to be divided in opinion; one being rebel and the other Union. On the 9th we drove our cattle to Woodstock and sent them to Strasburg with a detail and the balance of the men returned to New Market and camped for the night at a house on the lower side of the Pike.

At Woodstock in a church we saw about 60 prisoners that were being taken back towards the rear. On Saturday May 10th about noon we arrived at New Market and Captain Preston was appointed Provost Marshal with a detail of about 20 of us for Provost Guard. From then till Tuesday the 13th we remained in camp. There was some bushwacking and three of the 5th New York were shot within two miles of camp. That regiment had quite a fight on the Pike towards Harrisonburg, killing, it was reported, 18 of the enemy, mostly with the sabre. Everything indicated that the rebels were following us back. The infantry had mostly retired to Strasburg and on Tuesday the 13th we saddled up about 1 o'clock in the morning, waited till daylight, moved to the meadow at the foot of Rude's Hill and fed our horses on wheat in the bundles from a large stack. We were the rear guard and camped that night on a hill near a burned bridge, halfway between Edinburg and Woodstock.

On Wednesday the 14th we remained here all day in the rain. About 1 o'clock at night there was an alarm and we had to saddle up, move out towards the Pike, stand two hours, and then go back to camp. Ewell had followed us to New Market and most likely was sending out his cavalry to find out where we were. The next day we moved to within four or five miles of Strasburg and camped on a hill on the west side of the Pike.

While in this camp we were joined by our third colonel, Charles K. Tompkins, who was a Regular. He had belonged to the 2nd Cavalry and was noted as the leader of the charge through Fairfax Court House by a detachment of cavalry in the month of June 1861. This was heralded in the papers at the time as a great victory, but it did not amount to much, and in his regiment it was called the "Rum Charge." His commission was dated April 24th and Captain Sawyer of Company I had improved the opportunity while in Vermont to pull the wires and he now returned as Major to date from April 25th, vice Bartlett resigned.<sup>2</sup> I think that it was found out

that Vermont was quite as good a place to look for promotion as on the "Tented Field."

It was understood that Governor Holbrook had a personal difficulty with Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg that prevented him from commissioning him (Kellogg) as colonel and that he would never do it no matter how many vacancies occurred.<sup>3</sup> In Company I the officers were "ranked up," that is Lieutenant Henry Flint was made captain, Lieutenant Josiah Grout became First Lieutenant and First Sergeant Charles A. Woodbury became Second Lieutenant.<sup>4</sup>

Here, the detail that had been sent on with the cattle joined us and reported a theater in Strasburg. On the 16th a party under Captain Preston went out west scouting and seeing smoke and a mounted man we made preparation for a fight by tearing down about five hundred rods of rail fence, but no enemy appeared and we returned to our starting place in camp.

We remained in this camp till the 24th of May grazing our horses down in the meadow near the camp of the 27th Indiana, but on the 23rd four companies of the 1st Vermont and two from the 1st Maine went out scouting west and south from camp under Major Sawyer. We came up the Middle Road till west of Woodstock village and then charged down into the town but found nothing. We thought we saw a suspiciously large washing hung out at the house near our old camp, but that amounted to nothing and we returned to camp. The reason that we saw nothing was that when Jackson had joined Ewell at New Market he decreed not to make a direct attack on Banks at Strasburg, but had decided on a flank movement to cut him off and capture the whole thing. He passed over the Massanutten Mountains from New Market into and down the Luray Valley. At Front Royal, which is situated at the lower or north end of the Luray Valley, was posted Colonel Kenly of the 1st Maryland Infantry with his regiment, some of the 5th New York Cavalry and a section of Knapp's Battery. They were camped between the river and village and numbered about eight hundred men. From Front Royal there extends north to Winchester a good pike and just after it crosses the Shenandoah, which forks here at a little place called Cedarville, a dirt road branches off to Middletown. It will be seen that this was a very important position for Banks to hold for if the enemy were in possession of it they were nearer Middletown or Winchester than Banks was at Strasburg and so could cut



him off from retreating towards the Potomac. Jackson moved with great secrecy which the topography of the region enabled him to do, but I am of the opinion that our cavalry could and should have been used to find out the enemy's position and moves, and could have done it.

Well in the afternoon of the 23rd a sudden attack was made on Colonel Kenly and "after a short fight near his camp he retreated across the Shenandoah and endeavored to destroy the bridge but was only partially successful. His men were armed with smooth bore muskets and were not able to defend the men on the bridge from the heights behind as they would have been able to if they had had rifles and also the rebel cavalry fording the river were soon in amongst them and nearly all were captured, including the artillery. By this time it was night and Jackson did not advance much till daylight. During the night some of the 5th New York Cavalry, who escaped from the fight, made their way along the base of Massanutten Mountain and reported to Banks at Strasburg the startling intelligence that a superior force of the enemy was across the Shenandoah and on his flank and rear.

Preparations were instantly made for a backward move and by daylight the wagon train and infantry were on the road towards Winchester. Early in the morning also, Jackson was up and adoing, moving towards Middletown, hoping to come in between Banks and Winchester, and some of his cavalry struck the Pike ahead of Banks and his staff, but were driven back again. The result was that most of the infantry and wagons passed along to Winchester, but some of the cavalry, wagons, and such, were cut off as will appear in following the movements of our regiment, which we will now do.

About one A.M. on the 24th we saddled up and proceeded to Woodstock under command of Colonel Tompkins. Arriving at the edge of the town, part of the regiment was left there, and the rest moved in with drawn sabres, but found nothing as the enemy were at that moment between Front Royal and Middletown. We returned to camp and found the wagons packed up, ready to move, and into one of them was put the regimental colors, which to say the least was a very unusual proceeding. By whose orders it was done I do not know. A large pile of corn and some new clothing was consigned to the flames and things began to look as though we were on the retreat.

A piece of stove pipe mounted on wheels was made to play the part of a "Quaker Gun" and left on the hill near the camp pointing to the south. As the enemy did not come in that direction it did not amount to much.

Part of the regiment under Major Collins had gone forward (or rather backward) with General Hatch and on arriving at Middletown had gone down the Cedarville road till they met the enemy and then fell back slowly before them to Middletown. When they attempted to go along the Pike towards Winchester they found the rebels lined the wall at the side of the road which was full of mule teams without drivers and which were going down the road at a furious rate. The air was full of dust and the yells and shots of the rebels made a scene of confusion equal to "Pandemonium." They passed through with some loss and joined the balance of Banks' army near Winchester.<sup>5</sup>

But no so with the fraction left in camp. We soon received orders to come forward in great haste and leaving the camp ground moved through Strasburg at a trot, where we passed quite a large number of sick and disabled of both Banks' and Shields' commands who had been left to their fate. We proceeded north from Strasburg two miles and crossing Cedar Creek by the ford went up the hill on the Pike and found the wagons had come to a halt.

Before us along the Pike as far as the eye could reach arose a cloud of dust caused by the runaway teams and the enemy's cavalry, while in front in the village of Middletown and to the right shots resounded. We drew up in line and drew sabre, while the two pieces of artillery that were with us unlimbered and opened fire towards Middletown. Soon after to the right the shots came nearer, and out of the wood came the Collis Zouaves, General Banks' bodyguard, falling back before the enemy, and in a minute the bullets were whistling around us.<sup>6</sup> We were neither armed nor formed to resist infantry, and so we coutermarched and moved down the hill and across the creek. The chaplain who had drawn his sabre and taken his position in line accompanying us.<sup>7</sup> We retired in good order, although we were assisted by several shells from the rebel artillery, which had opened on us while our own had retired with us, loaded with chain and cannister and in position for firing if we had been charged upon. After crossing the creek we passed up the hill and at the top the artillery opened on them again, while some of our carbineers were dismounted and checked the rebel skirmishers. If this had been done sooner it would have been of

greater advantage, as when we came back the wagons came also, but they went down through the ford and one of the foremost ones being stalled, all the rest were unable to get by, so the enemy came up and captured them right under our noses, and in them was the Colors.<sup>8</sup>

Just then along came Colonel De Forrest with part of the 5th New York and Colonel Tompkins stated to him the situation of affairs and said that we could do one of two things: charge through or try and go around, and he was willing to lead through. But some of Company I knew of a way to the west of the Pike by which we could come into Winchester, so it was decided to try that way. This was in the afternoon and we marched along the Middle Road, most of the time at a trot, till about midnight, when we struck the Pike in the rear of our army, and passing into Winchester bivouacked in the streets for the rest of the night. This is on the record as the third engagement and is called Middletown as the first is called Mount Jackson (April 16th) and the second Port Republic (April 25th).

Sometime in the night before we struck the Pike Major Sawyer's horse fell and bruised his leg so that he was unable to be with the regiment for some time to come.<sup>9</sup> I fastened my horse in the street and crawling through a fence, slept in a garden with George Austin, but part of the regiment was south of Winchester on picket.<sup>10</sup>

At day light the skirmishing began and we were drawn up in line on the west side of the Pike and north of the town as a reserve. The long wagon train went streaming down the Martinsburg Pike accompanied by the sick, wounded, and deadbeats. Soon the artillery opened and shells from the enemy's left began to come over near us and the volley firing was quite heavy. Then we were ordered to charge somewhere and drawing sabre broke by fours and moved into town by the main street, the streets being quite full of stragglers, men from hospitals, and the like. Just then the enemy developed their line on both the Front Royal and Strasburg pikes, quite overlapping our infantry, and charged with their usual yells and at the same time General Banks gave orders to fall back, which was accomplished in considerable disorder. We had nearly passed through the town when we met our troops coming back and close behind them the rebels, like one wave after another, and seeing the utter foolishness of continuing on, the order to "By fours, Right about wheel" was given and obeyed in good order, and turning down a side street we passed out of the town by the main street that, meeting with two others, forms the Martins-

burg Pike. We passed by several large buildings containing stores on fire, which made it so warm that the horses crowded to the other side of the street and could hardly be forced past them.

As we were going up the little hill near the depot the telegraph which crossed the road here caught the guidon on the Third Squadron which I was carrying and jerked it out of my hands, so that when it slipped through my hands it bounded back two or three rods. I turned out to pick it up, but the men near shouted to go along and not try to recover it, so I turned into the ranks again. I am of the opinion now that it might have been recovered without any serious danger, but that is passed and gone and cannot be changed. Near there as I was looking at Ashbell Meacham, who was just ahead of me, I saw him throw up his arm and drop his sabre. Two of our men (Loren Chase and John Coombs) rode up to him and held him on to his horse, but they soon saw that it was of no use, so they laid him down beside of the fence near a small house and left him as there was no time for anything else, the enemy being close behind and off to the east a short distance on the ridge was a column of the enemy's infantry even with us.<sup>11</sup> He was hit in the back, and probably through the heart, the bullet passing through the sabre strap that passes over the shoulder. It is not known whether the bullet that killed Meacham was fired by the rebel army or by the citizens, but I for one did not think the enemy were so near till he was hit and it is a matter of history that the citizens did fire on our soldiers as they were coming through the town and at General Banks himself.

As we approached the junction of the three roads, we saw that they were crowded with infantry who were throwing away knapsacks, bands their instruments, and so forth, and realizing that there was no room for us, we tore down the fence at the right of the road and passed along in the fields. After marching here for half a mile or so things were straightened out a little. We crossed over to the west of the Pike, where the regiment was all together again and some carbineers were sent back and checked some of the enemy's cavalry who showed a disposition to come too close. Soon after this the cavalry were all got together again and then our squadron under Captain Preston was sent with two guns to act as rear guard on the east of the Pike, all under Captain Judson of General Hatch's staff.<sup>12</sup> The artillery would unlimber on some knoll, faced to the rear, and the cavalry being placed as "support" would wait till the rear of the column had passed, and then moving on for a mile or so, repeat the operation. This was also done on the other side of the Pike, and it was so well managed

that the enemy did not molest us to any great extent during the rest of the retreat.

We heard some whistling by an engine and had rumors of large reinforcements from Washington under General Dix, but it proved to be only a few hundred from Harper's Ferry and I think they returned the same as they came. It was supposed that we should retreat to Harper's Ferry, but we found that we were going towards Martinsburg and Banks gave as a reason for this that he did not know but that the enemy were between him and Harper's Ferry at or near Berryville. But this was not the case although next year Milroy found it was, to his cost. At Bunker Hill my horse having lost all of his shoes and not ever having been good for anything "played out," refused to keep up and was shot by Captain Preston, while I joined the column on foot on the Pike. At this time we were behind the rear guard, but all the cavalry and some of the infantry made quite a long halt at Martinsburg occasioned by one brigade of infantry getting lost and enabled us all to get some distance ahead. About 10 o'clock at night I arrived at the ford opposite Williamsport, Maryland where nearly all of Banks' army was, except the cavalry which did not come till morning, and going into a barn I found it full of soldiers. Burying myself in the straw I went to sleep as soon as my aching limbs would allow, and thus passed the night.

In the morning the cavalry and some of the wagons forded the river and a ferry having been rigged, I crossed over and proceeded up to the village of Williamsport. At the hotel I saw Captain Judson and some of our men who had skedaddled from Winchester were bragging to him how many rebels they had killed and showing their notched sabres for all the world like Falstaff's "seven men in buckram." Learning that the regiment was camped in the woods about a mile out of town I joined them there, carrying on my back about three pounds of sugar that I had found thrown out of a wagon on the other side of the river. Banks' infantry had marched in the last two days 53 miles. The large wagon train of over five hundred wagons was safe except for a few that broke down and were burned, and except our regiment's wagons that were left at Cedar Creek. Uncle Young the ambulance driver, although over fifty years old, brought his ambulance safe through with two sick men.<sup>13</sup> The cavalry must have marched at least 75 miles in the same time. The loss in prisoners had not been great, except the 900 or 1,000 sick left at Strasburg and the killed and wounded were about the same on both sides.<sup>14</sup>

On the 27th of May about 150 of the regiment who had gone off over the mountains with Colonel DeForrest came in by way of Sir Johns Run, so that our loss was not so much as supposed. Only five gone from our Company (D) and of these one by the name of Ralph W. Merrill was never heard of afterwards. He was sick and in the wagons when we had the fight at Cedar Creek on May 24th and that was the last ever seen of him, although he is down in the Adjutant General's report as deserted, but by what authority I do not know.<sup>15</sup>

A few days before this Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg had gone to Vermont on a furlough and soon after Major Sawyer went also. We were without tents or baggage of any kind and had to build shanties of boards to live in till we received our shelter tents, which was not till the 11th of June.

Jackson followed up to near Halltown, but was stopped by General Saxton's artillery and remained till the 30th of May when he retired up the Valley.<sup>16</sup> When the news of his appearance on the Potomac reached Washington the authorities were thunder struck and all their old fears for the safety of Washington were revived and increased ten-fold. McDowell's orders to join McClellan were countermanded and he was ordered to send 20,000 men instantly to the Shenandoah Valley by way of Manassas Gap, which he proceeded to do, although he represented to them that it was just what the enemy wanted him to do and just what he ought not to do. But the "junta" at Washington who managed things then had set what they called a "trap" to catch Jackson, who knew every road and by-path in the Valley. They were to do this by having McDowell and Fremont come in behind him at Strasburg, one from the east and the other from the west and thus "have him," but the day before they shut the door behind him he fell back up the Valley and Fremont had nothing to do but follow after, always just one day behind. McDowell when he saw that Jackson was ahead sent Shields up the Luray Valley to head him off when he turned off to go to Richmond, and Shields' advance brigade under General Tyler arrived at Port Republic on June 7th and got possession of the only bridge across the Shenandoah by which Jackson could escape. Fremont had followed him pretty close and was at Harrisonburg and thus Jackson was between the two. If the bridge had been burned all would have been well. For in that case Jackson could not have crossed. If he had not crossed he could not have joined Lee before Richmond and if he had not joined him Lee could not have fought the Seven Days fight that ended in the raising

of the siege of Richmond. It was one of the lost opportunities of the War. Tyler did not burn the bridge, but thought to hold it and the next morning he was attacked before daylight by all of Jackson's force, lost his artillery, was driven back and Jackson escaped.

On May 30th we saddled up early and proceeded down the river about 14 miles to picket a portion of the country that afterwards became historical as the battlefield of Antietam. We passed through Sharpsburg and down to the mouth of Antietam Creek where we guarded several fords across the Potomac between Sharpsburg, Maryland and Shepardstown, (West) Virginia till the 31st when we returned to camp in a hard shower in which the claps of thunder sounded so much like artillery that Lieutenant Colonel Johnstone in command of the 5th New York thought we were attacked.<sup>17</sup>

On the 9th of June a large number (11 from Company D and about the same through the regiment) of sick were sent to the hospital in Hagerstown and nearly all of them never came back to the regiment, but were discharged. Banks' retreat had convinced them that during this war somebody was agoing to get hurt and a great many never enlisted with any such intention. The blacksmiths also went there to shoe the horses and it was at that place that Knapp of Company D said he procured some of the best whiskey that was ever made. He said that it was 105 per cent proof.<sup>18</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Back Into the Valley and Service Under Pope

On the 11th of June we received new shelter tents, guidons, some new horse equipments and turning over our Savage revolvers received new Beals revolvers throughout the regiment.<sup>1</sup>

The Sharpes' carbines were all issued to four companies who were armed with them throughout and were the heavy cavalry while the other six companies had only sabres and pistols and were called light cavalry. Companies D and I (and E and K, I believe) were the carbineers.

On the 13th we crossed the Potomac again to Virginia and camped that night about three miles beyond Martinsburg. Part of the regiment had been over there about for a day or two. We crossed on the ferryboat and during the day were joined by Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg who was just returning from furlough. The next day we marched to Winchester and camped just east of the city in a piece of woods. I went with the teams on account of being sick and hunted up the place where Ash Meacham was buried. We remained in this camp till the 22nd of June drilling some, being reviewed by General Hatch in the wheat field west of the camp, foraging honey, and so forth. On the 19th of June Companies E, F, C, and K went to Snicker's Ferry fifteen miles from Winchester under command of Lieutenant Colonel Kellogg. This force remained there until the 9th of July and then joined the regiment at Flint Hill over the Blue Ridge on July 11th.

David Hall, formerly of Burke, Vermont, lived in a house near here, the proprietor of which was in the Rebel army. It was from this person that the command "bought" their beef and mutton and Uncle Young used to sell the hide to a store keeper nearby for cash, tobacco, whiskey, and so on.

On the 22nd we marched to within about a mile of Middletown and camped in a piece of woods on the west of the Pike. We were now feeding our horses mostly on grass, sometimes taking them out to graze and occasionally cutting grass and carrying it into camp. That evening Lieutenant Jed P. Clark of Company B rode out about sundown to the west of camp



after milk and so he says was fired on by bushwackers and his horse killed. He was seized, blindfolded, and taken a distance of fifteen or twenty miles and then released after being paroled, came on foot and reported his mishap at headquarters.<sup>2</sup> So the next day a squad of us were sent out after the bushwackers, but did not find anything worthy of mention, except large quantities of the fine English cherries for which the Valley was celebrated. When we first began to get them we were very careful not to injure the trees, but later in the season it was noticed that there would not be much left of the trees but the larger branches after we had passed. We also made some investigation for honey, but were very apt to find "safe guards" at nearly all the houses. This system of safe guards was an outgrowth of the system of carrying on the war without hurting anyone, which was then much in vogue, but which, to use a common expression "afterwards played out."

On the 24th it rained, but on the 25th a squad went out "bushwacking" and brought in five men supposed to be guerrillas, some of which acknowledged having been in the Rebel army, but denied all knowledge of any irregular operations. The next day we took them down to Middletown to General Banks' headquarters where they were examined by Colonel Clark and then committed to the guard house. While here we saw Generals Banks, Sigel, Fremont, Green and Hatch. Fremont had retired back down the Valley to this place after his unsuccessful fight with Ewell at Cross Keys. In this fight Turner Ashby had been killed accidentally as the Rebels say, by one of his own men, a fate similar to that which befell Jackson next year at Chancellorsville.<sup>3</sup> In the afternoon Captain Preston volunteered and we went out west scouting for bushwackers. When the roll was called preparatory to going out two men, Austin A. Bailey and Furnal Webber, were missing and the captain left orders with Sergeant Mitchell to tie them up when they came back. Mitchell got a lariat rope ready and the order has never been countermanded, so that I presume it will be executed when they do return, which rather necessary part of the program had not taken place at last accounts.<sup>4</sup> We remained out all night and the next day skirmished up a steep hill, where we had heard about some bushwackers being seen, but did not capture anything but cherries.

On the 28th we marched to Cedarville three miles from Front Royal over the same road that Jackson had advanced on the month before. The next day the cavalry, a brigade of infantry and a battery of artillery, all under command of General Crawford,<sup>5</sup> were sent up the Luray Valley to

make a reconnaissance in force. We camped that night in a hard rain storm about nine miles from Luray Court House, which is the county seat of Page County and quite a thriving little village compared with many Virginia towns. The next morning we moved forward in good season, Company D in advance. When within about three miles of the place we came in sight of a Rebel vidette and while some of the men engaged his attention, Barney Decker and one other man slipped around in the woods and came in behind him and captured him.<sup>6</sup> We then proceeded on our way and soon ran onto another picket, who put spurs to his horse and made for Luray firing his pistol over his shoulder and us after him at full speed. We soon found out that we could not catch him and came down to a walk. We were in hopes to surprise the enemy that we knew were in town, but when this fellow got away we gave it up. When we arrived in sight of the place we saw them leaving town with their wagons by a road to the southwest and we took after them at full speed. The correspondent of the New York World keeping along with us, we cautioned him to keep back or there could be danger, but he paid no attention to it, thinking perhaps like General Hooker "who ever saw a dead cavalryman?" As we advanced up the hill we gained on them some for they were trying to save their wagons and finally they came to the right about and tried to charge us, but only a few of their men obeyed the order. Our command was considerably scattered, those with the fastest horses being some way ahead and seeing there were but few of us halted, but one of the Rebels being unable to hold his horse or for some other reason came charging pell mell amongst us. We took possession of him, William Wheaton taking his pistol and myself his carbine, a Colt's revolving rifle with the name J.G. Kidd cut into the stock and with two chambers empty.<sup>7</sup>

During this time they kept up a pretty sharp fire on us and Joseph W. Gordon<sup>8</sup> had been killed by a bullet through his head or as you might say his brains blown out. The young scamp that we had taken claimed that he had killed one Yankee, but I don't know whether it was true or merely boasting. While this was going on Captain Preston had taken Company I and was making a flank movement on them, but upon their perceiving it, moved off after their vanguard which had by this time got some distance ahead. We followed for a short distance, but as we had already exceeded our orders, which were only to go to Luray, after coming into line and exchanging a few shots with them we returned.

The rest of the cavalry only came as far as the village, while the infantry were two or three miles back. We learned that the Rebel cavalry around there were commanded by General Robertson<sup>9</sup> who had succeeded General Ashby. We also learned that there was no rebel infantry in the Valley, Jackson having gone to Richmond, but the information came too late to be of practical utility for the Army of the Potomac was then making its "change-of base" to the James River and to which "change of base" Jackson had contributed in a great degree to bring about. Gordon's body was placed in an ambulance and carried back to the camp ground near Cedarville where the whole command arrived late that night, having made a march of above forty miles that day. The next day we buried him with appropriate military honors. The infantry who had camped near us furnishing a band for the occasion.

In the afternoon we moved our camp out to a hill about half a mile towards Middletown. This was named Camp Gordon in honor of the one killed yesterday. About this time the government concluded to concentrate the three fag ends of armies under Fremont, Banks, and McDowell into one to be called the "Army of Virginia" and appointed to command it John Pope. General Fremont, who outranked General Pope, took offense at being ordered to serve under a junior officer and was relieved from his command and General Franz Sigel appointed in his place. General Pope's first move was to concentrate his army in the neighborhood of Culpeper and to accomplish this Banks and Sigel's commands were to march over the Blue Ridge by way of Chester's Gap. He also issued a grandiose proclamation about "lines of retreat," "showing your faces, not your backs to the enemy," "disaster and shame lurk in the rear," and so forth, which he must have realized in a month or two.

On the 6th of July we packed up and moved through Front Royal and began to climb the Blue Ridge. We camped that night about ten miles south of Front Royal and remained till four o'clock P.M. the next day, when we moved on a piece and after going into a church to avoid the rain we bivouacked for the night at a point about fifteen miles west of Warrenton. We were in Rappahannock County and near the head waters of the Rappahannock River, here called the Hedgeman River. Nearby was a little village called Amissville. It was very warm weather and some of the infantry who had followed us were sun struck. About three o'clock on the morning of the 10th we made a reconnaissance to within nine miles of Culpeper. We got back to camp about noon without seeing anything of

importance and remained there until the next day. About night fall we saddled up and moved two miles and bivouaced. The next day (July 12th) all the cavalry went to Culpeper. Company I had the advance and running on to a Rebel picket had quite a skirmish with them, in which sergeants Eben Grant, and Marvin Mason were wounded, both in the arm.<sup>10</sup> The column then pushed on and while passing through a woods within two miles of Culpeper was fired on again by a squad of Rebels concealed in the woods, which threw them into momentary confusion and resulted in William Woodward of Company D getting the point of his elbow shot off.<sup>11</sup>

The Rebels who were reported to be a part of the crew of the Merri-mac took to the woods and though closely followed by our men made their escape. The command proceeded to near Culpeper and went into camp between the Woodville Pike and the Brandy Station road.

Captain Conger<sup>12</sup> with a detachment was sent out to reconnoiter on the Orange Courthouse road and captured a few prisoners which he told the citizens he was going to hang. I was on guard the day before and went with the wagon train that day as train guard. The men found some whiskey on the road and were helping themselves to it until Quartermaster Dewey came along and enforced the Maine law by kicking in the barrel head and spilling the contents. We found plenty of honey about here and large quantities of blueberries and large blackberries. We began to get new potatoes and onions also. We were now the extreme advance of Pope's army, there being nothing else within at least one day's march. Sigel lay back towards Sperryville, while McDowell was yet near Fredericksburg and Banks' main force lay near Warrenton. The pickets were established on the Madison, Orange and Raccoon Ford roads, but as we were nearly isolated General Hatch was in rather a nervous state and every time the pickets were fired upon by bushwackers we would have to saddle up and remain so all night. This happened several times and I believe one of Company K was severely wounded while on picket.

The 16th of July we packed up about six o'clock A.M. in a heavy rain and moved out through Culpeper about half a mile on the Raccoon Ford Road and bivouacked for the night. At two o'clock the next morning we moved on to the Madison Court House Road towards the southwest. This move had probably been made with the expectations that the citizens would send word to the Rebel commander that the Yankees were moving

on the Raccoon Ford Road while the move was really made on the Madison road to the right. Just out of town on this road we passed a grave yard in which about four hundred dead from the Rebel army at Manassas had been buried. The wooden headboards at the head of the graves stated that a great many of them had been killed or wounded at the First Bull Run while others had died in the hospital at Culpeper.

It rained nearly all day and when we arrived at Russell's Ford about two miles from Madison Court House we found the river so high that we could not ford and so we went into camp for the night on the north bank. In the morning we crossed over but arriving at Madison Court House four companies, D, E, F, and C were sent on a reconnaissance towards Gordonsville. We talked about how that night we shall sleep in Gordonsville little imagining that some of us would in the way we did. Corporal Ide with two men, Conceader Durlam and E.W. Southworth, were sent ahead as videttes.<sup>13</sup> We were moving on a good pike road that leads from Gordonsville through Madison over the Blue Ridge to Newmarket. When near Jacks Shop we saw two mounted men who took a by road to the right. After going several miles farther we saw two more mounted men in the road before us and we beckoned them to come towards us, but upon their not paying any attention to us we fired at them and they took to their heels and left.

Sending Southworth back to report we followed after them at good speed. After going about half a mile we turned around a point of woods and thinking we were getting some distance away from the column, I concluded we would go to the top of the knoll just beyond and halt. Just as we arrived there we heard the click of the cocking of guns and looking behind and to the right saw a company of Rebel infantry arise up from the bushes with their guns cocked and at their shoulders. They ordered us to dismount and surrender which we under the circumstances concluded was the best thing we could do, and accordingly obeyed. By this time Southworth who was coming up to join us had seen what was up and turned around to escape. The Rebels fired a volley at him which broke his horses leg, but did not disable him so much but that he escaped. We were taken back to Liberty Bridge across the Rapidan where there was a brigade of Georgia infantry, some cavalry, and a battery who had come up that morning from Gordonsville. They asked us how many there was of us there. We replied that there was four companies of cavalry with us and Banks' Corps was behind. The Rebel artillery was on a hill to the left of the bridge a little

back of the skirmish line. The infantry was rather ragged and many of them had pieces of meat on their bayonets, but we noticed they took good care not to get far from the bridge. They might easily have captured our whole force there, but did not seem to want to undertake it, but were satisfied with saving the bridge.

They took us into a cooper's shop and after keeping us there a few hours sent us to Gordonsville under guard, a distance of about six miles. We arrived there about dark and were confined in a temporary warehouse along with quite a number of prisoners that had been captured in the last few days. The Rebels would talk and argue the question with us and one man claimed that the South would have been satisfied with the "Crittenden Compromise,"<sup>14</sup> which I denied. Some of them were going to have us hung near Culpeper.

The next day we were put in the cars and sent to Richmond and after being examined by the Provost Marshal, who took away my matches, knife and map of Virginia, shoved us into the Libby Prison.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### In the Army Under Pope

On July 16, when Corporal Ide and Conceader Durlam rode into the Confederate ambush, the 1st Vermont marched as part of a cavalry force searching for Stonewall Jackson's forces from the Army of Northern Virginia. After learning that the enemy was in force at Liberty Bridge, just seven miles south of his position, General John Hatch returned to Culpeper, a less exposed position.

The 1st Vermont Cavalry at this time suffered from a lack of leadership in the highest positions; a failing that had plagued the regiment since being organized. Colonel Charles Tompkins had to deal with commanding the regiment without any assistance from field grade officers because Lieutenant Colonel George Kellogg had disappeared and supposedly returned to keeping his hotel and bar in Brattleboro, without the formality of obtaining a furlough or leave of absence.<sup>1</sup> Both of the two majors nursed injured legs in Vermont and neither Edward Sawyer nor William Collins returned to the regiment before October. Tompkins faced a nearly impossible position for a Regular Army cavalryman, that of commanding a depleted volunteer regiment, and being an outsider, without having proper subordinates to take up some of the tasks of running the unit.

Tompkins clearly disliked his position and looked forward to the end of the campaign to give it up and return to being a staff quartermaster, a position he would fill for the rest of his lengthy Army career. Tompkins wrote a curious article for *The Vermonter* magazine in 1912, entitled "With the Vermont Cavalry, 1861-2." It was curious in that he spent half the piece talking about horses and never dealing with details of military operations. The colonel rated the officers under him in the summer of 1862. Not surprisingly, given fifty years of hindsight, Tompkins felt that Addison Preston should "have put at the head as lieutenant colonel. I was pleased with him from the first. He was a stirring fellow and was always looking after things."<sup>2</sup> Tompkins felt that William Wells was a good man and a good officer and should have been a major. He also remembered captains Henry Flint, Josiah Hall, Joel Erhardt, Selah Perkins, John Bennett and Frank Huntoon, as well as adjutant Edgar Pitkin, Chaplain John Woodward ("he would have made an excellent line officer"), Assistant

Surgeon Ptolemy O'Meara Edson, and Quartermaster Archibald Dewey. "In fact there were few among them that were not good, but they were misplaced."<sup>3</sup> Absent from the "good" list were the two majors. Absent also was the soon-to-be cashiered Captain George Bean of Company G, the tipsy George Conger of Company B, and Company E's Samuel Rundlett.

Tompkins then claimed that he forwarded a list of promotions to governor Frederick Holbrook and that Holbrook sent his son to Virginia to deny the promotions. He cited that the various companies had to be consulted on the promotions, presumably under the militia laws. Because of this denial, and given the fact that he had not solicited the appointment, Tompkins offered this as the reason he resigned as soon as the campaign ended. This appeared rather odd, as Addison Preston received a promotion to lieutenant colonel on September 16th, while Tompkins had resigned only on September 9th. Josiah Hall became a major on October 4th and William Wells was promoted to major on October 30th. All three war governors promoted officers outside the companies in which they served, and, in general, the state gave short shrift to the militia laws providing for enlisted men electing their officers once the regiments entered federal service. More likely, Tompkins found the command of a volunteer regiment beyond his capacity and prayed for an early return to Regular Army desk duty. Tompkins maintained his desk job until his 1894 retirement.<sup>4</sup>

Tompkins did manage to shake out some of the more inefficient officers by pressuring them to resign. William Wells noted that

quite a number of officers have resigned, Lt Col Kellogg, Capt [Franklin] Moore, Capt [Frank] Platt, Lieuts [Dennis] Blackmer (Co G) & [Nathaniel] Haywood (Co F). I hear that Maj Collins now at home is to be Lt Col. Maj Sawyer, Sr. Maj & Adj. Pitkin, Jr. Maj. This latter appointment will create feeling in the Regt, as some of the Captains do not liked to be jumped by a Lieut. If he is commissioned Capts Conger, Preston, Rundlett & Hall will resign I think, besides quite a number of Lieuts. I am sorry to hear so much ill feeling in the Regt.<sup>5</sup>

But the vying for promotion and power that plagued the First Vermont Cavalry for a year and a half had only just begun, and marked the regiment's operations until the opening of Grant's Campaign. A month into that campaign, William Wells, the lowest ranking captain when the



regiment was organized at Burlington in 1861, had advanced to colonel and was well on his way to becoming one of Vermont's most decorated soldiers.

Given the poor condition of the regiment's command structure, its assignment to the brigade of John P. Hatch hardly improved its effectiveness. Hatch proved to be a poor cavalry commander, and the promise of leadership he offered at Annapolis came up hollow in Virginia. In a second expedition, General Hatch marched his brigade south to Stannardsville, twenty-five miles from Culpeper. There he received reports of a Confederate cavalry force to the south. As a result he turned northwest, crossed the Blue Ridge into the Luray Valley, marched north to Sperryville, and then rode back across the Blue Ridge to Culpeper, arriving there on July 27th. The 110-mile march had little to show, except a few Confederate prisoners captured in the Luray Valley. On the following day, General John Buford replaced the ineffective Hatch, as commander of the brigade which included the First Vermont, Fifth New York, First West Virginia, and First Michigan cavalry regiments of Nathaniel Banks's Second Corps of the Army of Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

On August 2nd, Buford chose the Vermonters and New Yorkers to lead Samuel Crawford's infantry brigade on a reconnaissance in force to Orange Court House, nearly twenty miles southwest of Culpeper. Captain Henry Flint commanding his squadron of companies D and I as skirmishers, was followed by the New Yorkers as advance guard. They were in turn followed by the balance of the Vermonters. Buford encountered the outpost of Beverly Robertson's cavalry brigade (2nd, 6th, 7th, 12th Virginia cavalry regiments and 17th Virginia Cavalry Battalion). The Federals drove in the picket posts, killing one Virginian and wounding another in a running fight that began five miles north of the town and ended in the streets of Orange Court House. Flint's Vermonters and the New Yorkers pressed into the town, driving the enemy before them.<sup>7</sup>

Colonel William E. "Grumble" Jones had advanced that morning to support the pickets with his Seventh Virginia Cavalry, and learned of the Federal advance when he reached a point a half mile from the town. He led his men in a counterattack, driving the New Yorkers and Flint's men from the town, killing two of the Yorkers and wounding several more. For a few moments it looked as though Buford's men would break and retreat into the Vermont regiment and carry both units back upon Crawford's in-

fantry.<sup>8</sup> William Wells, in reserve, watched as "our carbine Cos (A, D, E, I, & K) together with 5 NY commenced firing upon the Rebels. After a short space they all broke and fell back (our forces) about that time Co F & C were called upon to charge with Sabre which they did and drove the Rebels like chaff before the wind out of town."<sup>9</sup>

Josiah Hall's 4th Squadron, made up of his Company F and Wells's Company C, first tried to stem the retreat. Homer Ruggles of Company C remembered, "Captain Hall of Company F had ordered a countermarch. The company commenced to break at this order, but Captain Wells of Company C, who was in the rear of them, drove them to their places with drawn sabre; and Captain Hall, seeing that Company C was ready to support him, countermanded his first order and gave the word 'Charge!' and we went in with a yell, and the rebels broke and fled in every direction, and we after them, running them down and taking them prisoners."<sup>10</sup>

Lieutenant John Blue, riding that day with the Seventh Virginia, pulled up in the rear of the regiment in the crowded streets of the town as the head of the column had driven the Yankees out of town. Blue observed,

The next moment a column of Yankees wheeled into main street from the direction of Madison's Mills and without halting charged right at the rear of one column. Well, I don't know how others felt, but I believe I was pretty badly frightened for a moment... The Yankees were bearing down on us not fifty yards away at a fast trot, firing their revolvers as they came, a few men and a few horses were struck. Most of their shots were passing over our heads. Then arose that terrible Rebel yell and with drawn sabre at a tierce point and rowels buried deep in our horses flanks, at them we went at full speed, when we met the blue and the gray was considerably mixed for a few moments.<sup>11</sup>

"The boys behaved nobly," Wells wrote home, "only about 80 in both Cos, drove the entire force of Rebels."<sup>12</sup> However, John Blue felt, "it soon became evident that the weight of numbers was forcing us back. We were over matched in the mix... Our men had given back faster and the Yankees on that side were forging past us... We kept backing and defending ourselves the best we knew how... The truth is we were hemmed in by a whole brigade. Out numbered at least five to one. Over powered and very

much demoralized."<sup>13</sup> Blue and the Seventh rallied on a knoll about two hundred yards southwest of town.

"Co F had 3 men wounded, none seriously. Co K one man quite seriously wounded in arm," wrote Wells, "a few of us went out about 3/4 mile out of town. I was one of them."<sup>14</sup> Ruggles recalled the pursuit:

Captain Wells started with his Company in hot pursuit—through a barnyard and lane, and over a hill, after a lot—run them into a ditch, where they stuck fast, and we took them. As fast as they were overtaken they were sent to the rear. After passing through woods and underbrush, and having sent over half of his Company back with prisoners, Captain Wells turned to come back and came very near being taken by a squad of rebels, but managed to dodge their bullets, which were mainly directed at him.<sup>15</sup>

Wells said,

on our return we met some Rebels which two of my boys mistook for our forces and went to join them. (The Rebels halloed to them to come) they were taken prisoners. John McLaughlin of Barre, Alonzo Hoyt of Cabot, they were not wounded. I saw them ride into the Rebel ranks, tried to have them follow me. The fact is we went a little too far with too small a force & had to run our horses as fast as they would go to keep out of their hands.<sup>16</sup>

The Vermonters captured forty Confederates, fifteen by Wells's company, and inflicted several killed and wounded. Grumble Jones claimed he lost ten wounded and forty missing, Tompkins upped those figures to 25 killed, 2 mortally and several severely wounded and 52 prisoners, while John Blue felt the Seventh Virginia lost 75 men killed, wounded and prisoners.<sup>17</sup> The First Vermont lost four wounded and four captured, while the Fifth New York lost three killed, nine wounded and eleven missing.<sup>18</sup> "The fact is that the charge of F & C saved the day so says the General," Wells proudly recorded.<sup>19</sup> Homer Ruggles wrote home to Waterbury, "I would not swap our little Captain for any in the regiment." He was less enthusiastic about Colonel Charles Tompkins; "All this time our Colonel Tompkins and General Crawford were at a 'safe' distance on a hill, at least a mile from town, and, after we had driven the rebels away, the General sent word to us that we were doing well, and to keep to work."<sup>20</sup>

Jones watched Buford's men occupy Orange Court House for an hour, tearing up some railroad track and cutting down telegraph wires. Then they moved west to Liberty Bridge, where Buford's brigade remained for a week, picketing the Rapidan River. Buford picked up some valuable information concerning Stonewall Jackson's force at Gordonsville and Louisa Court House. Nathaniel Banks's corps moved forward to cover the Rapidan. On August 7th Buford's Brigade concentrated near Madison Court House, ten miles north of Liberty Bridge. However, two days later when Banks blundered into Jackson's main body at Cedar Mountain, the Vermonters were sent ten miles further north to Woodsville. This was another instance of the Bay State general's failure to understand the proper use of his cavalry.<sup>21</sup>

As Jackson fell back across the Rapidan before Pope's entire army, the Vermonters joined Buford's Brigade in pressing Jackson's rear. Addison Preston led companies A, D, E, and I in advance and captured twenty prisoners on August 11th. The next day the regiment advanced to Robinson's River, a couple of miles below the Cedar Mountain battlefield, and brought off a number of wounded Confederates, including Major R. Snowden Andrews, Jackson's Chief of Artillery.<sup>22</sup>

The following week the regiment camped at Mitchell's Station, about five miles south of Culpeper. Many of the men were sick and many of the horses were broken down from the constant service since the end of March. "I do not think our cavalry will be called in as we have been working so hard for the past few weeks," Wells wrote home.<sup>23</sup> Increased Confederate strength caused Pope to withdraw across the Rappahannock, leaving the cavalry to guard the fords. While Longstreet's Corps remained close to Richmond to watch McClellan evacuate the Peninsula, Jeb Stuart's cavalry division joined Jackson. With McClellan headed for Washington to reinforce Pope, Longstreet marched northwest to join Jackson along the Rappahannock. Writing from Barnett's Ford on the Rappahannock, sixteen miles northwest of Fredericksburg, Wells mirrored the confusion seemingly endemic throughout the Union command:

Day before yesterday [August 18th] Cos D & C were ordered out on a scout with two days rations. We went on our scout, soon after we left the whole division moved. Burnside came to this place, I do not know where Genl Pope is or where Banks, Siegel & McDowell have gone, but expect have fallen back to get a

better position. The one we held was poor as the Rebels held the heights south of the Rapidan. Our scout went out knowing nothing of the move. They sent messengers to us but they did not find us. We done our scouting & on our way back to Camp when we met some of the NY 5th who told us that all hands had left us so we followed on, overtook our Regt at this place last night—here we are. Whare we are to go or when I know not.<sup>24</sup>

Buford's men marched northwest along the Rappahannock some twenty miles to Waterloo Bridge. They reached there on August 23rd, a day after Jeb Stuart crossed at the same place on his raid into Pope's rear area. The Vermonters skirmished with Confederate infantry across the Rappahannock on their march north and skirmished with more infantry at Waterloo Bridge. In these actions the regiment lost two men killed; Brainard Walker of Company I and Daniel Dana of Company E, both fighting dismounted, and a handful of men wounded. In addition to five men captured at the Battle of Second Bull Run, these were the only casualties the regiment suffered during the campaign. Pope's campaign wrecked the regiment, but this was a result of horses breaking down rather than by enemy action.<sup>25</sup>

When Buford concentrated his brigade at Waterloo Bridge, somebody failed to notify Companies A and I under Captain Henry Flint that were picketing Kelley's Ford. Confederate cavalry and infantry crossed the Rappahannock promptly cutting Flint's men off from the regiment, then ten miles north. Tompkins lost contact with these two companies and for the remainder of the campaign he thought that the Confederates had captured them. Flint, seeing that he could not penetrate the Confederate army to his north and west, marched to the east along the banks of the Rappahannock past Fredericksburg to Aquia Creek. There, they found protection by the elements of the Ninth Corps that garrisoned both places. Once at Aquia Creek, Flint marched north into the Defenses of Washington and rejoined the rest of the regiment on September 6th.<sup>26</sup>

The eight other companies played a minor role in the rest of the campaign, as did the whole of Buford's Brigade. From Waterloo Bridge the brigade marched to Haymarket, just east of Thoroughfare Gap, but failed to detect either Jackson's or Longstreet's march through the Gap. On August 29th, Buford retreated to Manassas Junction and on the 30th, the climax of the campaign, the brigade fought a mounted engagement on the

southern flank of Pope's retreating army. During the engagement, the First Michigan and the attached Fourth New York Cavalry managed to defeat the Second Virginia Cavalry, but Confederate brigade commander Beverly Robertson deployed three additional regiments and routed the Wolverines and Yorkers. Buford retreated back across Bull Run at Lewis Ford at a rapid gait. William Wells said,

they shelled us at a smart rate, yet we got out well, being the only Regt that [had] all the Companies with the Regt when we came out, that they did when they went into the fight. No one was killed in the Regt, five taken prisoners, we were lucky... We retreated in a great deal of disorder that is the Infantry did, our Regt kept in just as good order as when on the march & several times drew up in line to charge,—but did not, being ordered for'd that night.<sup>27</sup>

However, Company C's Commissary Sergeant Lorentio King, who probably traveled with Pope's main body, wrote home on August 30, 1863 that "I think there is some contrast between activity this year and activity last year—one year ago we were at Bull Run doing some tall Skedadling I tell you."<sup>28</sup>

Writing from Alexandria on September 7th, Wells anticipated McClellan's return to reorganize the beaten army; "Pope, as the latter is not the man for the place, his head is not big enough. Our Regt is in hopes to stop here a few days & rest & reorganize, yet we may have to leave any day. For nine days during the retreat we unsaddled our horses once, fed corn twice, were on the moove night and day. All the sleep we got was on the ground holding our horses in line."<sup>29</sup> Addison Preston of Company D noted, "I have but 24 men fit for duty. The rest are worn out. We have had scarcely a moment's rest night or day since the battle of Cedar Mountain. Sometimes we have been in front of the enemy, sometimes in his rear. Twice have we marched for miles with one division of the rebel army in our front and another close in our rear, on the same road."<sup>30</sup>

When Pope's army entered the protection of the Defenses of Washington, Buford's Brigade went into camp at Alexandria, and here the headquarters of the regiment remained until the following June. McClellan chose Buford as Chief of Cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, and Colonel R. Butler Price took over command of the brigade, after his Second

Pennsylvania Cavalry, a regiment that had seen very little field duty, joined the worn out troopers.<sup>31</sup>

At this point the Vermonters could not mount over four hundred men for duty, and things quickly got very worse as hundreds of their horses gave out. On September 15th all the men captured during the spring and summer arrived in Annapolis on parole, and being exchanged, reported for duty. On August 1, 1862, in the midst of Pope's campaign, the regiment reported 25 officers and 608 enlisted men for duty, with 434 good horses and 174 unserviceable horses. After returning to Alexandria on September 4th, the regiment totaled 23 officers and 433 enlisted men (nearly 200 enlisted men were absent sick), with 335 good horses and 82 unserviceable horses. But the regiment continued to lose horses. On October 1, 1862 there were 25 officers and 543 enlisted men on duty, but with just 249 good horses and 107 unserviceable horses. Horse problems grew worse for the Vermonters by November 1, 1862, with 19 officers and 665 men present for duty with a grand total of 14 serviceable mounts! Even a month later the serviceable horses had climbed only to 55. In short, the regiment joined the forces in the Defenses of Washington, only to be dismounted through the late fall. Purchases in Vermont and government issue brought the number of serviceable horses to 552 on January 1, 1863 and to 668 by the 24th on that month.<sup>32</sup>

Captain William Wells and First Lieutenant Frank Huntoon received notice on September 8th that they had been detailed, along with a number of enlisted men, to return to Vermont to assist in recruiting for the ten companies in the field and to raise two additional companies to bring the regiment up to a standard organization. They packed up, happy to return home for the first time in a year, and joined Major Edward Sawyer who had raised nearly two hundred recruits and was drilling them at his home town of Hyde Park.<sup>33</sup>

On September 9th Charles Tompkins resigned and Adjutant Edgar Pitkin lost his position as a result of a change in regulations stating that an adjutant must be detailed from one of the line companies. Pitkin later enlisted in the First United States Cavalry and died of wounds in action. As a result, Governor Holbrook appointed Edward Sawyer to fill Tompkin's position and Sawyer picked his friend, Dartmouth educated Clarence Gates, to be adjutant. Both appointments set off extreme emotions. In Sawyer's case it was because he had ranked at seventh in line of promo-

tion when the governor advanced him to replace Major John Bartlett. Now he was selected over William Collins to be colonel. Gates was hated simply because he was an outsider with no military experience. This served as another example of elevating political appointees over experienced and deserving officers. Governor Holbrook also appointed Addison Preston to lieutenant colonel effective September 16th, a much more popular promotion. Shortly, Preston suffered dangerous wounds and returned to Vermont to recuperate, opening the way for a vicious fight for promotion and a power struggle among the officers that nearly wrecked the regiment.

The original company commanders had been ranked at Burlington from one to ten; but before September 15th there were no field grade officers with the regiment, and both George Conger of Company B and Addison Preston of Company D claimed to be the senior captain. On September 15th Conger signed on as senior captain and regimental commander; the next day Preston relieved him, and assumed command, his commission as lieutenant colonel having arrived. Preston also managed to find the mustering officer and have the necessary paperwork completed and oath administered the same day. Conger promptly sent in his resignation. The War Department just as promptly accepted it, but backdated it to September 12, so that Conger, in retrospect, was not even in the army when he commanded the regiment.<sup>34</sup>

George Conger went back to St. Albans. He reappeared briefly as the man who rallied the pursuers of the Confederate raiders who robbed the banks in his hometown on October 19, 1864. True to form, Conger didn't catch them all, but managed to pick up a few raiders, along with their leader Bennett Young. However, he turned them over to Canadian authorities in the false hope that the British would find their invasion a violation of neutrality.

Although the First Vermont Cavalry entered the Defenses of Washington to rest and recruit, the assignment began with a bang. Colonel R. Butler Price received orders to cut off and destroy a supply train thought to be on the way to Lee's army, then lying near Martinsburg. On September 21st, Price led a force made up of detachments from all of his cavalry regiments from Fairfax Court House westward to Aldie, where they captured and paroled two hundred sick and wounded Confederates who had been in a hospital there since the Second Bull Run Campaign. Newly commissioned Lieutenant Colonel Preston led three understrength Vermont



squadrons of about seventy men in the advance through Middleburg and Upperville toward Ashby's Gap in the Blue Ridge. This would normally have been an easy ride into Winchester. But two miles beyond Upperville, the Vermonters came upon the Sixth Virginia Cavalry, some 150 men under Lieutenant Colonel John S. Green. Blocking the turnpike, the Confederates filled the road in column of platoons between the stonewalls lining the road.<sup>35</sup>

Preston, a mile in advance of Price, sent out flankers to the fields on either side of the turnpike and then trotted out to within two or three hundred yards of Green's waiting line. The Virginians stood completely still, handling their pistols until the Vermonters got within range. The Vermonters came to a stop, uneasy with the silent line facing them. Preston ordered them on once again, but once again the battalion came to a stop in a crowded mass. Preston then exhibited his trademark, leading by example. He jumped the stonewall and rode around the mass of his battalion as they milled around on the turnpike, and jumped back in front of his men. Waving his sabre and calling upon his men to follow, he rode straight at the Sixth Virginia. Three of the company commanders at the head of the column followed at his side. Joel Erhardt, Selah Perkins, and Henry Flint, spurred on their horses and caught their colonel. The men followed at full speed with sabres drawn and pistols still in their holsters.

Green waited until the Vermonters reached within fifty feet of his line before ordering his men to fire. The Sixth held their pistols too long, most of their shots missed and then the Vermonters pierced their line, swinging their sabres. A pistol ball hit Preston, but he kept on. Green fired at Perkins, who fell dead. Green was then cut down by several sabre strokes. Preston passed through the Virginians and as they turned to flee, he found himself wedged between two men trying to shoot him. He sabred one and knocked the pistol away, but in turn the other shot Preston through the right arm, while another bullet grazed his stomach. In the melee four Virginians died and another thirteen were wounded—all by sabre strokes—and fourteen were captured. Captain Selah Perkins died of his head wound. Seven others, including Preston, were wounded, but survived. Another Vermonter was taken prisoner. The Vermonters paroled the severely wounded John Green on the spot.<sup>36</sup>

The Sixth Virginia fled into Ashby's Gap. However, besides the capture of five wagons near Upperville, the Vermonters learned that the sup-

ply train had already passed over the Blue Ridge and that the Gap was held in force. Unable to complete his original mission, Price returned to Fairfax on September 23rd.

This successful attack, like the one at Orange Court House on August 2nd, increased the regiment's morale and underscored the light cavalry tactics that marked the regiment's training, combat experience, and armament. The Vermonters relished mounted combat, perhaps because many of them were good horsemen before joining the army and because they had success with mounted tactics in 1862 and under Kilpatrick and Custer in 1863. When assigned to James Harrison Wilson in 1864 and forced to adopt dragoon tactics, the regiment balked at serving as mounted infantry. But when Custer took command of the Third Cavalry Division in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864, the regiment once again employed the methods of fighting from horseback, and it was no accident that their final combat operation of the war, on the forenoon of April 9, 1865, mirrored Preston's wild charge at Ashby's Gap.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Regimental Politics in the Defenses of Washington

Edward Sawyer had spent the summer in Vermont nursing his injured leg (he limped until his death in 1917), and politicking with Governor Frederick Holbrook for promotion. He successfully recruited some two hundred recruits for the companies in the field, and laid the groundwork for raising the two additional companies to bring the regiment up to a twelve company standard. By the end of the second week of September the recruiting party under Captain Wells and Lieutenant Huntoon joined him at Hyde Park, his hometown in Lamoille County in northern Vermont. The recruits gathered early in September after being enrolled and furloughed by Sawyer for the month of August. Beginning September 4th, the recruits fell out for 1½ hours of drill in the morning and afternoon. Most of the time they were drilled by the enlisted men who arrived with Wells and Huntoon. Sawyer had not served with the regiment since May 24th, and it was always a question how much drill he knew as a company commander.<sup>1</sup>

Sawyer, Wells, and Huntoon got the men together on September 30th, and had them driven twenty miles south in coaches to the Waterbury railroad station. Sawyer and Wells accompanied them back to Washington via New Haven, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, arriving in camp on October 5th. In New York City they met up with the supposed wife and two sisters of recruit Stephen Chellis. Sawyer, always the ladies man, escorted them to Washington and out to the regiment at Fort Scott. Once the recruits reached the front, Sawyer assumed command of the regiment for the first time. Wells and the enlisted escort returned to Vermont to organize, clothe, and train companies L and M.<sup>2</sup>

The War Department had not overlooked the vacuum in leadership exhibited in the Vermont Cavalry, particularly after Tompkins resigned and Preston returned to Vermont nursing his wounds suffered at Ashby's Gap. (Preston did not return for months. Once in Vermont, he received the mission to purchase nine hundred horses in the state for cavalry service.) Tompkins's resignation and Preston's wounds once more left the regiment in the hands of a captain, this time the forty year-old Samuel Rundlett of

Company E. Word passed quickly up the chain of command, initiated by Charles Tompkins, that the regiment had no field officers present.<sup>3</sup>

The lack of leadership quickly became known by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, now Quartermaster Captain Tompkins' boss. Meigs passed the information along to the commander of the Defenses of Washington, Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, who took over the position on September 2nd. The case of Sawyer's absence,

with that of the 1st Vermont Cavalry, came up by letter from Brigadier General Meigs, Qr. Mr. Genl. [on] Sept. 11th—In this, the abuses in regiment are reported, and the two majors including Sawyer, are reported as in Vermont, and the regiment without a field officer, the Lieut. Colonel being absent, keeping a bar, selling liquor, the colonel recently resigned. General Meigs says that 'The abuses in the promotion of officers are destroying the regiment.'—September 20th—case referred to Major General Banks, Comd'g, for investigation and report.<sup>4</sup>

Nathaniel Banks detailed Lieutenant A. J. Alexander of the 3rd United States Cavalry to go to the regiment and investigate charges brought by Montgomery Meigs on September 22nd. Alexander rode out to the regiment at Alexandria and interviewed the officers in camp, beginning with senior captain Samuel Rundlett. In the time between Meigs first bringing charges on September 11th to the 22nd, Addison Preston had been severely wounded, George Conger had resigned, and Adjutant Edgar Pitkin had been mustered out. There were precious few officers to interview who knew anything about the regiment outside of their companies. Alexander reported back to Banks the following: that there was

no record of Major Sawyer being on leave; a rumor that he has been appointed Colonel; he has served very little with regiment, has reputation of being entirely ignorant of military affairs. Was slightly injured in May by a fall from his horse; obtained 30 days leave in consequence, & June 20th was ordered to report to Gov. Holbrook on recruiting service, nothing known in regiment of the authority for prolonged absence. The regiment is in great need of

an efficient Colonel; it would not be benefitted by being placed under its former Major (Sawyer).<sup>5</sup>

The investigators then contacted Major James Austine, the Regular Army supervisor of the recruiting service in Vermont and inquired whether Sawyer had reported to him for recruiting duty. Austine replied that Sawyer had not reported for duty and "said he knew nothing of his being sick on arrival in the State; heard he is in good health; has seen him, he was perfectly well and has been appointed the Colonel."<sup>6</sup>

Banks put Alexander's report and Austine's comments together and submitted them to the Secretary of War on September 29th, with the following endorsement.

It appears that Majors Sawyer & Collins were absent by authority, both having left their regiment last May. They left regiment on sick leave, afterwards placed on recruiting service. They neglected their duty in not reporting to the Sup[erintenden]t of Recruiting service and that officer reports that he does not know of their being sick, when they returned to the State. Altogether their military record is discreditable to them, and if the Governor has appointed Major Sawyer, Colonel, it is recommended that he be mustered out of service in that capacity. Good men should not be commanded by Officers who have preferred to be on recruiting service, to looking after the interests with which they have been charged by the public. Both officers have been ordered to rejoin the regiment.<sup>7</sup>

All of this transpired while Sawyer and the recruiting party at Hyde Park recruited and trained the new soldiers and brought them to the regiment. Sawyer assumed command on October 5th as a colonel (he had not been mustered by the federal government as such) and William Collins arrived a few days later; on October 27th the War Department issued Special Order Number 314, stating that "Colonel E.B. Sawyer 1st Vermont Cavalry is hereby mustered out of the service of the United States from September 16th, 1862, his date of present commission, for inefficiency and neglect of the welfare of his regiment whilst a Major thereof."<sup>8</sup>

All of this caught Sawyer completely by surprise as he had no knowledge of being under investigation. No board had been convened, and no public or private hearing had been held. The War Department's action was neither a court martial nor an elimination board; it was simply an administrative action. Sawyer's removal left the regiment in the hands of equally "discreditable" Major William Collins, but the War Department did not seek to remove him, only the much-promoted Sawyer.

Edward Sawyer was born in Hyde Park in 1828, one of the several sons of Joshua Sawyer, a noted northern Vermont lawyer, who prepared Edward to follow in his footsteps. After an education in the local schools and a three year residence in Quebec with a brother engaged in business there, Sawyer returned home, passed the bar in 1849 and went into business with his father. The Sawyers were Federalists and, later, Whigs. They made the transition to the Republican Party in the 1850's. Sawyer was a member of the 1856 convention that originated the Republican Party in Vermont and he was also present the same year to listen to a few of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in Illinois. In 1860 Sawyer served as a Lincoln delegate to the Republican national convention. In 1861, driven by his hatred of slavery, Sawyer ended his legal practice, resigned his position as clerk of the Lamoille County court, and helped raise Company D of the 5th Vermont Infantry. He then recruited and became captain of Company D of the 1st Vermont Cavalry, in his mind a more desirable command, perhaps, because of his having ridden with Royal Cavalry officers during his three years in Canada.<sup>9</sup>

Sawyer ranked seventh in line of promotion when the regiment was organized at Burlington. Nevertheless, after escorting Jonas Holliday's body to Oswego, Sawyer returned to Vermont and probably met with Governor Frederick Holbrook to plead his case for promotion. When John Bartlett resigned in April, Sawyer was selected to become major in his stead, jumping over all the senior company commanders and landing just behind William Collins, the senior major. Sawyer served with his company at Middletown and Winchester, but his horse fell on his leg during the confused fighting on May 25th and he left for home on that day, not to return until October 5th. With his promotion to colonel, Sawyer jumped Collins and the vacant lieutenant colonel position. In an army where officers compared dates of rank as an indication of their self-worth and outsiders were shunned, Sawyer's success in translating his politics into mili-

tary rank angered and disgusted those officers he had bypassed in his grab for regimental power, particularly Major William D. Collins.

William Collins stands in sharp opposition to Edward Sawyer. Unlike Sawyer, who traced his ancestors back into 17th century New England, Collins was a newcomer, an immigrant who had settled as a teacher and farmer in Bennington after a term as a noncommissioned officer in a British artillery battery. He styled himself a military expert, and among the thousand Yankee farmers, lawyers, teachers, and artisans who made up the Vermont Cavalry, he was the only man who had served in the military before the outbreak of the Civil War. In the wake of Jonas Holliday's suicide and the breakup of the regiment, Collins commanded a battalion fighting Turner Ashby's cavalry and did perform capably. Yet, on May 24th he led the First Squadron of companies A and G and operated with a battalion of the 1st Maine Cavalry to locate Stonewall Jackson's advance from Front Royal to Middletown. Collins ordered the "attack" into the dust clouds along the Valley Turnpike that ended so disastrously to the Vermonters and men from Maine. Newspapers in Vermont within days pointed their fingers at him as having caused the needless misfortune with a veracity that is hard to deny today. His seven page report of his actions that morning ranks among the most bombastic, selfserving and truthless to be printed in the *Official Records*. Collins was wounded and captured, but the New Hampshire Battalion of the 1st Rhode Island Cavalry recaptured him at Front Royal on June 1st. Like Sawyer, Collins returned to Vermont to recuperate and eventually recruit men for the regiment.<sup>10</sup>

Sawyer's removal by the War Department contained a clause that said he could present his case and attempt to win reinstatement; Sawyer took full advantage of this clause, but it took him two months to make his appeal and convince the War Department to reinstate him. However, for Collins and others in the regiment, Sawyer's removal gave them license to celebrate and vilify him in print and in person. Sawyer remained in camp until November 3rd, when he undertook a change of base to Washington, taking with him a horse, so he would not have to walk. Regimental commander Collins promptly sent Sergeant Major H. Dwight Smith after Sawyer to get the horse back and filed a report for a stolen horse,

that on the 3rd day of November 1862 a horse belonging to the 1st Vermont Vol. Cav. myself commanding disappeared from the

camp near Long Bridge Va—on search being made the said horse was found in Washington in possession of E.B. Sawyer of Vermont, who took the said horse from said camp without authority...who refused to deliver said horse to the Sgt. Major of said Regiment ordered to take him, accompanying such refusal with threats.<sup>11</sup>

Collins either wanted the horse back or to have it taken off the regimental account. Sergeant Major Smith, rebuffed by Sawyer, promptly filed a complaint with the Provost Marshal. When Sergeant Major Smith returned to the regiment, having failed in his mission, he took some measure of revenge by writing to his hometown Middlebury *Register* of just how bad Edward Sawyer really turned out to be.

In his hotel room in Washington, Sawyer began to gather support by writing to Governor Holbrook, Assistant Surgeon Edson (to verify the extent of his injury), and to newly-promoted Major William Wells. He also contacted the five-man Vermont delegation to Congress, Republicans all. Sawyer had heard that Collins and others would bring charges to insure that his bid for reinstatement would fail, charges that involved embezzlement of the money due the recruits Sawyer enlisted, the stolen horse affair, and the pesky problem of Mrs. Chellis and her sisters, who turned out not to be married to Chellis or to be sisters.

Sawyer wrote to Wells, still in Vermont on recruiting duty, on November 28, 1862:

I am receiving letters from many of the officers of the regiment, addressed to the Vermont delegation...asking them to interest themselves for me—now this is not necessary to enlist the delegation, for I have already had a tender of their aid, but the object of the officers is to make my restoration so triumphant as to forever put down this contemptible faction that now leagued with Tompkins, are trying to destroy the regiment. Will you write such a letter as in your conscience you can and send it to me to present to them? Also a separate epistle state what you know about the affair of Mrs. Chellis—alias whore!



State that you slept in the same room with me at Brown's and that we did not see the creatures after we entered the house and state who we supposed they were for I am informed and believe that Erhardt has actually preferred charges against me on their account, and I positively hope it is true.

By attending these matters at once you will greatly favor me... Collins is looking up the matter of the officers horses and making himself generally odious as usual—he rode two of the grey horses to death—yet he is very pious—By the way Paige caught the old saint in a house of ill fame last Saturday night, but this is not to repeat.

He is going up soon depend on it, i.e. up the spout!<sup>12</sup>

It transpired that Mrs. Chellis and her two sisters turned out to be three Vermont prostitutes who enjoyed having Colonel Sawyer escort them to the front. Joel Erhardt found them out and Sawyer's act of being a gentleman soon would be used against him. As for Stephen Chellis, Major Collins made the 32 year-old recruit a sergeant over the heads of all the veterans in Company G.

Sawyer carefully presented his evidence to win reinstatement, noting that all his actions received sanctions in special orders: his furlough on May 25th; an extension on June 24th; an order assigning him on recruiting duty on June 20th; and Major Austine's order on September 26th ordering Sawyer to return to the regiment with his recruits. Sawyer claimed to have gathered nearly 300 recruits, while Collins, in the same time period, brought in about 20. Sawyer also included an extract of Charles Tompkins report of Banks' retreat where Tompkins claimed that Sawyer's injury deprived the regiment of the services of a "valuable officer." Sawyer appended a four page letter from Governor Holbrook supporting his reinstatement and all those letters from officers supporting his case.<sup>13</sup> The War Department reinstated Edward Sawyer on December 20, 1862.

When first returning to camp, Sawyer broke Sergeant Major Smith to private and sent him back to Company K.

Sawyer's return did not turn out to be the triumphant event to put down the disaffected faction. If anything, events soon became much worse. Collins and Erhardt gathered support and both filed court-martial

charges. Sergeant Henry O. Wheeler of Company A, who was also reduced to private, got his father Reverend O. G. Wheeler from South Hero to write Abraham Lincoln.

Reverend Wheeler's letter is nothing but hearsay, but illuminates some of the feelings about Sawyer that winter.

Vermont having only one [cavalry] regiment, her darling, feels deeply injured and outraged by the reinstatement of E.B. Sawyer as Col...He went first as Captain, and while acting as 'Officer of the day,' I believe, told Orderly Gibbs of Co A to 'bite his a-s.' Orderly Gibbs told me this...I give you the story to show you what sort of man Sawyer is. In the spring Sawyer came to Vermont and by means, which you understand any man who will, may employ, returned to his Regiment as Major...When removed from his office by the War Department, the men of the Regiment were perfectly delighted. This I know from personal observation, taken on the ground, at the time of my visit to the Camp in November. The idea of his restoration was perfectly abhorrent to them. He is a low, vulgar, profane, unprincipled man...His first acts upon reassuming command, were to avenge himself upon his enemies.... I suppose the true reason for his punishment [Sergeant Henry O. Wheeler] is that his Father was known by Col Sawyer to be opposed to his being reinstated, and as he could not reach me he chose to avenge himself upon me, through my son...I did communicate my views to our Governor.<sup>14</sup>

More telling, both William Collins and Joel Erhardt filed separate court-martial charges on January 8, 1863. Collins got two of the men he recruited in Bennington County to assert that Sawyer had embezzled money from the recruits. Leander White claimed that he had signed the payroll for forty nine dollars, but had received nothing at the time, although others had been paid. Sawyer had refused to pay White either his wages or bounty money, even when White's company commander, Lieutenant Frank Ray, had applied directly to the colonel. It was not up until December 29, 1862, that Sawyer paid White \$7.85. Charles Barton certified that although he had been paid all the money due him, he had overheard Colonel Sawyer tell the paymaster that he need not pay all the men.

Collins promptly forwarded the affidavits and his own series of charges on behalf of Private White.<sup>15</sup>

Joel Erhardt, commander of Company A, filed charges of conduct unbecoming an officer and also misuse of an army ambulance because Sawyer had knowingly consorted with prostitutes and drove them out to the regiment in a military ambulance.

In this that the said E.B. Sawyer Col. 1st Regt Vt. Cav'y while in command of detachment of recruits enroute from Burlington, Vt. to camp of 1st Regt Vt. Cav'y near Fort Scott Va did meet & associate himself with three lewd women—bearing the reputation of common strumpets-known as Miss French, Kate Sanger alias Old 76 & one other name unknown—The said Kate Sanger having been expelled from the town of St. Albans Vt. as a common prostitute—and further that the said E.B. Sawyer Col. 1st Regt. Vt Cav'y did associate with & accompany the said strumpets from New York to Washington D.C. to the Metropolitan hotel where rooms were procured by him for the said strumpets accomidation. All this done while enroute & at Washington DC afore said on or about Oct. 1st 2nd & 3rd 1862...that on or about the third day of Oct. 1862 the said E.B. Sawyer...did receive in presence of the men & officers of his regiment & entertain at his head qrs. in camp near Fort Scott Va the said strumpets...& make merry with them to the disgrace of his command...and did order [an] ambulance to be used in the conveyance of said strumpets Miss French Kate Sanger alias Old 76 & one other—from his quarters in camp...to Alexandria Va or elsewhere...."<sup>16</sup>

The first witness listed in these charges was none other than newly-minted Sergeant Stephen Chellis of Company G! The officers who signed these charges proved to be Sawyer's chief antagonists: Erhardt, Lieutenant Ellis Edwards of Company A, Captain Frank Huntoon of Company H, Captain William Beeman of Company B, Lieutenant Frank Ray of Company G, Captain Samuel Rundlett of Company E, Captain Robert Schofield of Company F, Lieutenant Edwin Higley Company K (along with Private H. Dwight Smith of the same company), Quartermaster Charles Sabin, and Chaplain John Woodward.

When the charges reached the desk of Samuel Heintzelman, who had assumed command of the Defenses of Washington from Banks, he delegated the matter to his Assistant Inspector General S. H. Lathrop, who chose Captain Wesley Merritt of the 2nd United States Cavalry to go out to the camp of the 1st Vermont and see just what was now going on. Merritt visited the regiment on January 23rd and filed two reports bearing on the court-martial charges and the chaos in the unit. Captain Merritt's reports ended all efforts to court-martial Edward Sawyer and told all members of the regiment that Sawyer would remain in command and that further attempts to oust him would be futile.

Merritt first investigated the charge of embezzlement and found that

Colonel Sawyer while in charge of a number of recruits for his regiment, at Hyde Park, Vermont, received...the State bounty due several recruits who were at that time in jail for various offences—desertion—drunkenness, visiting officers, etc. Major Halsey U.S.A. who was paying the one month's pay due; as also Major Austine who was paying the \$25.00 bounty, refused to pay these men as they were of bad character—undergoing punishment—and it was feared they would desert so soon as they got their money. For the same reason Col. Sawyer retained the State pay, giving it over to the men to whom it was due, as they improved in conduct and evinced dispositions to do their duty. Although perhaps irregular, the retention of the money by Colonel Sawyer was purely a means of punishment—The amount kept from each man was small...These charges are malicious:—preferred by a disaffected officer, of the regiment, from personal motives and supported by informal affidavits made, falsely, by two men, either through ignorance or malice.<sup>17</sup>

So much for William D. Collins.

Merritt then addressed Erhardt's charges of conduct unbecoming an officer.

I find in the regiment two factions; one of which is very violent against the Colonel commanding, while the other is very friendly in its feelings. The latter is the larger faction. Col. Sawyer's character as a gentleman and officer is seriously inveigled against by the other but after the most diligent inquiry I could find no specific act well substantiated by evidence to implicate his reputation. He is said to be more or less profane. He was charged with receiving and entertaining lewd women in his camp; but on inquiry I find he did so without a true knowledge of their character and on the representation that they were the wife and sister of a non-commissioned officer of the regiment.

The reduction to the ranks of Sergeant Major Smith was purely a matter of discipline rendered necessary by the Sergeant forgetting his position as a soldier, being disrespectful in his manner and corresponding with a public print as to the merits of his commanding officer.

Sergeant Wheeler was reduced to the ranks through misapprehension and so soon as the mistake was discovered he was replaced in his position and now expresses himself well satisfied.

There is a lamentable want of good feeling, among the officers of the regiment, which must materially interfere with the discipline and consequently with the efficiency of the regiment. Colonel Sawyer's lack of experience is greatly against his being regarded with favor, by officers of the regiment who were in the field while he was absent sick or recruiting—officers who claim, with reason, a superior knowledge of military matters. Although I have been unable in this investigation to discover anything that would support the charges against him, still, I gather, that Col. Sawyer 'is not,' in the words of a discriminating officer of the regiment 'either in a military, moral or social point of view, all that the regiment deserves in a commanding officer.'<sup>18</sup>

General Heintzelman accepted Merritt's findings and neither court-martial went forward, effectively ending the hopes of Collins' supporters to oust Sawyer.

A week after Merritt filed his reports, a committee of officers met to pass a series of resolutions supporting their colonel. These resolutions also went forward through channels to the War Department. The commit-

tee consisted of Surgeon George S. Gale, newly-returned Major William Wells, Captain John W. Woodward of Company M (in direct opposition to his father, the chaplain!), and recently promoted Lieutenant Hiram H. Hall. Captain Henry Flint of Sawyer's former Company I made a motion to accept the committee's resolutions in support of the colonel, and it was voted that the regiment's officers should sign to show their agreement to sustain Sawyer. Heading the list was Captain William Beeman, who changed his mind since signing Erhardt's court-martial charges on January 8th. Also signing were Captain John Bennett of Company D, and Lieutenants Charles Adams of Company H, Josiah Grout of Company I, John Newton of Company L, George Chase of Company M, Stephen Clark of Company F, Enoch Chase of Company M, Perley Cheney of Company C, Adjutant Clarence Gates, Assistant Surgeon Ptolemy Edson, Quartermaster Charles Sabin (another signer of Erhardt's charges), and Commissary Mark Wooster.<sup>19</sup>

The difference between the supporters and opponents of Edward Sawyer are easily seen in that Sawyer had jumped over none of the captains and lieutenants in the support group, but he had been promoted over all the captains and the major in the opposition group. Questions regarding Sawyer's character and actions were a smokescreen to mask the basic motive of officers who had been dishonored and hurt by Sawyer's grab for power.

Sawyer then proceeded to consolidate his power in the regiment: Joel Erhardt resigned on February 7, Samuel Rundlett on March 17, Frank Huntoon on March 25, and William Collins on May 7, 1863.

The story could end here, but it does not. From the time the regiment arrived in the Defenses of Washington in September 1862 until June 1863 when the Vermonters joined the Army of the Potomac, the unit operated in detachments strung out along a line from Dranesville in the northwest to Mount Vernon in the southeast, with the regiment's headquarters located at Fort Scott in Alexandria. Sawyer never went to the field before June because he was detailed on special duty as a member of a court-martial on February 5th and remained on that duty through April. William Wells, stationed at Dranesville, commanded most of the Vermont companies until Mosby captured him on March 17th. Major Josiah Hall took over from Wells and in turn was replaced in May by Addison Preston, while Sawyer continued in Washington. It is quite possible that these three men began to

agree with the anti-Sawyer faction who saw the colonel as inexperienced and a shirker. Certainly these thoughts gained weight when Sawyer obtained a leave to regain his health in Washington on June 24th, just at the opening of the Gettysburg Campaign. Sawyer did not rejoin his regiment until July 10th, after the Vermonters, ably led by Preston, Wells, Hall, and Bennett had fought at Hanover, Gettysburg, Hagerstown and Boonsboro. On July 13th, Sawyer's first time in command, he either ordered or supported an order that sacrificed Robert Schofield's squadron in an attack to reconnoiter the Confederate lines at Hagerstown. Schofield was bayoneted in the leg and captured, and twelve men became casualties. Wells was outraged. He began to openly talk about Sawyer's cowardice in sending these men out to slaughter, but remaining well in the rear himself. Sawyer heard of the talk, confronted Wells, and by the end of August the two former friends created enmity that both took to their graves.<sup>20</sup>

At the same time, Sawyer and Preston had a falling out, ostensibly about promotions in the regiment.<sup>21</sup> Questioning Sawyer's bravery seems to have become a common topic among the officers. Writing to Wells from Libby Prison, Captain Charles Adams lambasted Sawyer's conduct at Brandy Station on October 11, 1863. "I saw the Col with his face towards Vermont when we went into that last charge. Did he go direct?"<sup>22</sup> Many officers were bothered by Sawyer's regular absences in Washington throughout the summer and fall of 1863. While writing home about being wounded while commanding the regiment at Culpeper Court House on September 13th, William Wells noted that "Col Sawyer was absent in Washington when the Cav. advanced, Genl Custer was wounded at Culpeper and when Col Sawyer returned (after the fighting was over) he took commd."<sup>23</sup>

Sawyer commanded the First Brigade, Third Cavalry Division after he returned from Washington on July 10th (the original commander, Brigadier General Elon Farnsworth was killed at Gettysburg). In August the 1st Vermont and Sawyer were transferred to Custer's Second (Michigan) Brigade in order to give a position to Colonel John McIntosh, who took over the First Brigade and soon was promoted to brigadier general.<sup>24</sup> Sawyer occasionally commanded the Michigan Brigade in the fall, particularly after Custer left for home to nurse his wound. In November Sawyer left for Vermont to recruit where he remained until February 1864.

In the haphazard organization of the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren Raid beginning on February 28th, Sawyer commanded the Michigan Brigade. Due to poor tactical positioning and lack of proper pickets, Wade Hampton surprised the brigade at Mechanicsville on March 2nd, capturing a large portion of the 7th Michigan and driving off Sawyer's men in confusion. During the operations on the Peninsula and into King and Queen County during the first week in March, Kilpatrick placed Lieutenant Colonel Addison Preston in command of the brigade; Sawyer had no role. After another stint on court-martial duty, and yet another leave in Vermont, Sawyer was forced to resign under pressure by Custer and Phil Sheridan on April 24, 1864. Brigade commander Custer endorsed Sawyer's resignation with a statement "believing it to be for the interests of the service and particularly for the regiment I most respectfully recommend that this officer's resignation be immediately accepted." Division commander Alfred Torbert added "Respectfully forwarded as from his own statements he is not of much benefit to the service." Phil Sheridan "recommend[ed] highly" that Sawyer's resignation be accepted. Sawyer closed his accounts and left by May 1st.<sup>25</sup>

The rise and fall of Edward Sawyer has hundreds of parallels in other Civil War regiments, both north and south, because soldiers who fought the Civil War were a very contentious lot, while both governments raised units under old militia laws and prerogatives that dated back centuries. The federal government did not correct the abuses inherent in state units such as the election of officers from the ranks and the nomination of governors of anyone they saw fit for a commission until early in the twentieth century. The passage of the Dick Act reformed these irregularities by establishing the National Guard with nation-wide standards. Civil War officers were not subject to these constraints and political patronage played a major role in determining an officer's rank. In many cases, politics played the only role. What happened to Sawyer in his rise, fall, rise, and final fall is an illustration of the untrained political man in a military organization. So too is the reaction he caused in his fellow officers who would not suffer a leader they thought unfit. If Sawyer is a notable example of the political man as officer, the actions of Preston, Wells, Erhardt, and Collins determined that however an officer rose to command, that leader must be worthy of his soldiers, or suffer the consequences.



## Military Operations in the Defenses of Washington

The war did not stop while the regiment's officers fought each other with as great a fervor as they faced Confederates. Regimental operations from the skirmish at Ashby's Gap on September 22nd until the start of the Gettysburg Campaign in the following June consisted of picket duty, scouts, small-unit fights, and routine guard duty. Few actions took place in the fall of 1862, chiefly because of the lack of horses. Who of the 665 enlisted men on duty on November 1st did Major Collins put on the 14 serviceable horses or on the 55 horses able to be ridden on December 1st? During these months most of the regiment sat in camp just outside Fort Scott waiting to be returned to duty on horseback.

There were several skirmishes in the fall and winter months that involved members of the regiment. No men were killed between September 22, 1862 and April 1, 1863, although a handful were captured and a smaller number wounded.

By the middle of October a portion of the regiment marched to Centreville and on October 24th some fifty mounted men under Captain Henry Flint rode west to Manassas Junction to support a reconnaissance by Captain Conger of the 3rd West Virginia Cavalry. Flint had gained a reputation as an aggressive cavalry leader for his actions at Orange Court House, in saving his squadron after being cut off along the Rappahannock, and at Ashby's Gap. The men scouted across the Bull Run battlefield and when they reached the Junction, Flint detailed Corporal Charles Hoyt of Company I and six men to watch for Rebels while he took the rest of the detachment out towards Warrenton Junction. Within twenty minutes one of Hoyt's men reported the advance of Confederate cavalry. Hoyt sent him off to Flint and rode forward with two men to gauge the enemy's strength. He discovered the force to be about one hundred fifty strong, and when they saw him, they followed in hot pursuit. Hoyt turned and put spurs to his horse. "My horse ran well for a short distance, but I found he was giving out fast and the enemy were closing on me and were scarcely five rods behind, when in an attempt to cross the railroad track, my horse fell with me in such a way to confine one of my limbs under him."<sup>26</sup> Two Confederates promptly captured Hoyt and put him back on his used-up horse under guard.

Spotting some of Flint's men, the Rebel guards started firing at them. While their captors were distracted, Hoyt and James F. Goin, who had also been captured, turned and ran a second time. However, Hoyt's horse fell again. Hoyt saw a single Confederate mounted on a reliable horse coming towards him. Although unarmed, he jumped up and grabbed the sabre hanging on the Rebel's saddle and forced the man to surrender. He mounted the horse and rode away with Goin. Unfortunately,

we dashed into a squad of enemies...as soon as the 'reb' that I had captured saw that he was surrounded by friends, he was very brave and ordered me to give him back his arms...as soon as he got his gun, he cocked both barrels and said, 'Now damn you, you have abused me, and I will blow your brains out,' saying which, he placed the muzzle of the gun within four feet of my head and I supposed he would do just what he said he would do, but just at that moment Jim, my companion, cried out, 'Don't for God's sake, shoot the Corporal.' The 'reb' turned to see who had ordered him not to shoot, and for some reason did not fire.<sup>27</sup>

The Confederates mounted the troublesome Hoyt behind one of their men and set off for Warrenton Junction, but ran into a Yankee ambush. Hoyt promptly slid off the horse's back, ran towards his friends, "but just as I reached the woods, the rebels had rallied their forces and were charging down on our men, and as our forces numbered about twenty, and theirs about 200, they drove our men, and I was recaptured."<sup>28</sup> This time the slippery Hoyt's luck had run out and he found himself in Libby Prison, where he remained until December 15th.

In November 1862, the Vermonters were used to transfer horses to Burnside's army. Recruit Charles A. Stone of Company B (and cousin of war profiteer and future president Chester A. Arthur) recorded his adventures in one of the several detachments of dismounted cavalymen drawn from the Defenses of Washington. He left Fort Scott early on November 18th with other Vermonters. "We came direct to Alexandria this morning and without much delay. Procured our horses and am thus far towards the Army of the Potomac," he wrote that evening from Fairfax Court House. "A detachment of the First Virginia and 5th New York are with us. Captain Beeman is in command of our men." The column reached Dum-

fries the next day. "With some delay this morning we got mounted and marched at nine o'clock. Our forage wagons returned to Alexandria. Stopping to feed at noon at a farm house and we have rode all day. The rain continues. Last night with our feet to the fire burnt a large hole in my Rubber coat." On November 20th the men reached Falmouth and delivered their mounts to the quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac. Dismounted once more, the men lugged their saddles and bridles the fifteen miles to Aquia Creek Landing and waited for a steamer to return them to Washington.

Finally on November 22nd "the Steamer Nellie Baker...came along the burned wharf at Acquia Landing about 2 this afternoon. We stumbled over old car wheels and car trucks and axles and got on board and started for Washington, arriving at the Navy Yard wharf at 7 o'clock and after a circuitous march have reached camp pretty tired."<sup>29</sup> On November 25th Stone drew a horse of his own and joined the mounted men for duty.

The cavalry brigade guarded a string of mounted posts in advance of the infantry from Dranesville in the west to the Potomac River below Mount Vernon in the east. The posts were manned by detachments from the several regiments, not by single units, and the Vermonters (and perhaps the other regiments) intermixed companies on each post. When William Wells returned to the regiment from recruiting duty in Vermont in January, he received the assignment to command the Vermont companies at Dranesville and assumed command of the Vermonters there on February 6, 1863. He found "five Cos Vt Cav, 2 Cos 1st Mich, 1 Co First Ohio, 1 Co 2nd Penn, there is now in this command about 600 men...Maj Taggard has been in Command here, he is from the 2nd Penn."<sup>30</sup>

When Charles Taggart returned from a brief leave in Washington, the two locked horns over the fact that Taggart's picket lines were porous and could be easily breached.

When Edward Sawyer assumed command again, he set out to correct the problem of mixing several companies at a single picket post. On Christmas Day Charles Stone, then on duty at Annandale, recorded visiting fellow soldiers with two men from his post, and the three visitors were from companies A, B, and D. On January 16th Sawyer mandated company integrity. Stone recorded how the move occurred.

"It has been ordered by the Colonel that each company be gotten by itself. As they are now mixed together it will involve some moving and moving involves grumbling with some soldiers," Stone felt. Later that day "the contemplated move has taken place as ordered and Company B has established its headquarters at the Cross Roads and forms 3 pickets. Companies A and H remained at Annandale. Company K on their right reaches our left. Companies I, F, C and D are on their right which reaches Dranesville. This change enable each Company to have its own officers. Lieutenant Woodbury is our commander."<sup>31</sup>

On December 27th the pickets responded to J.E.B. Stuart's raid around the right flank of Burnside's army. Stone recorded that

Stuart Reported making a raid on the left of our line of Pickets in full force. Artillery and reinforcements sent for. Probably a chance for a fight. Corporal Williams and myself with five others sent out on advance picket." On the next day some of the Vermonters engaged Stuart's raiders. "The rebel cavalry which were at Burks Station last night at 6 P.M. advanced to within hearing distance but did not discover us, took the road to the left, came upon the patrol under command of Lieutenant Cummings of Company D near the Fairfax Pike. The rebels fired a volley which wounded the Lieutenant's horse and he was taken prisoner, meeting a battery and a Regiment of infantry the rebels scattered towards Fairfax. They there received some grape and canister which sent them off howling. Another detachment came down upon our right but were alike unsuccessful and three of them were taken prisoners by Frank Snay. The night was bitter cold. We did not allow ourselves to have any fire and consequently sitting without dismounting all night we suffered some with the cold. Patrols and Scouting parties have been out all day but find nothing of the enemy. Lieutenant Cummings has probably gone to Richmond.

Indeed he had, to be kept there until May 5, 1863. Stone would meet Lieutenant Cummings in Libby on February 23rd, he being captured by Mosby's men while on picket.<sup>32</sup>

The Vermonters settled into routine picket duty by the end of the year, rarely seeing a Confederate soldier. By the time Horace K. Idé returned from prison and an informal furlough in Vermont, the stage had been set for livelier duty in the Defenses of Washington, courtesy of the newly created Confederate partisan John Singleton Mosby.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Corporal Ide's Prison Experiences and Return to the Regiment

By late July 1862 Libby Prison was more of a hospital than a prison, being filled with the wounded of the Seven Days' fight. Fifteen died the day we arrived there. The guards were posted on the outer edge of the sidewalk all around the building, and we could pass from one room to another without hindrance.

We received nothing to eat from the morning we started [from Gordonsville] till the next morning when we received  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of bread and a small piece of meat and the same at night, but the meal at night was soon discontinued. The next day one of us took some canteens and went with a guard to a well and filled them. On July 22nd and 25th most of the wounded were sent to our transports at City Point near Petersburg and then there was a change in the management of affairs. All the well ones were collected into the middle rooms and the doorway between these and the other rooms walled up. The guards were placed at the doors so that we could not communicate with those in the other rooms and upon our remonstrating with the clerk of the prison about confining us so close as the weather was very warm he replied that Yanks had lived there all summer.

On the 26th all the well ones were sent over to Belle Isle but Durlam and I being slightly ill remained. We had some expectation of being paroled as another lot was sent on the 27th, but they only took wounded. In the west end of the second story area were confined a lot of citizens and sutlers and I swapped some coffee for sugar with them and pepper and a box for salt. The canal was right behind the building, separate from it by the width of the street and from this we received our water for all purposes occasionally a gunboat about sixty feet long with a 32 pound Parrot gun in the bow would come into the canal, fasten and stop opposite the prison. We kept hearing about an exchange of prisoners and finally the Richmond papers published the "Cartel" agreed upon by General Dix and D.H. Hill.<sup>1</sup> From this we were expecting to be paroled every day and the guards told us they were willing we should go any time, but that our government did not send for us, their transports all being in use to convey McClellan's army from the Peninsula to Washington, which was nearer the truth than they usually got.

We had a dollar or two when we were captured and I entrusted one of these to a guard to buy provisions for us but I never saw money or guard afterwards. On the 5th of August about three hundred well prisoners from Belle Isle were paroled and marched by our prison down the north bank of the James to our transports. This made us wish that we were on the island and all the well ones were sent there including ourselves. We marched over the bridge across the James River up stream through Manchester and then across another bridge by some nail works onto the island. We were much surprised at the green appearance which the fields presented and although we had been away from them only three weeks we could realize in part the feelings of those who had been confined for a year. On the island we found a large number of our men who had just arrived from Lynchburg, among whom was Joseph O. Clark, Joseph Hutchinson, and two discharged men, Carr and Brown.<sup>2</sup> They informed us that Albert Kiner-son had died at Lynchburg.<sup>3</sup>

We found four thousand prisoners on the island, occupying a space of perhaps two acres which might once had grass on it, but now was bare soil. The men were divided into squads of about one hundred each and a man appointed to draw the rations for each. There were some tents there but not near enough for all of the prisoners, so that for the first two weeks we slept out of doors which was not very inconvenient excepting that the sun was quite warm and occasionally we had a hard shower.

I sold my rubber coat to a guard for four dollars in Confederate money and bought a pound of sugar for one dollar and we afterwards bought a pint of molasses for one dollar and three pies for another dollar. Captain Montgomery of the guard would pass the money out to the peddlers outside and believed that when any greenbacks came along he put them in his pocket and gave the old women Confederate money. On the 15th of August a lot of officers from Salisbury, including Colonel Cochran of New York and Captains Dean and John Drew of Vermont<sup>4</sup> slept near our guard line and the next day crossed over the ferry to Richmond and were paroled. Occasionally we went in bathing in the James River ten at a time and remained five minutes. This was in a little channel about ten feet wide between the largest island that we were on and the small one towards the city, just above this the men were allowed to go in and wash their clothes, provided they kept one garment on, but one old man who was getting foolish by reason of his long imprisonment took off all of his clothes in there and came near being shot by the guard, who seemed very

anxious for the job. By means of some loud talk we induced the old chap to put on his clothes and pacified the guard by explaining to him that the old man did not know what he was about.

We used to talk considerable about making an escape and I had made up my mind that if we could get by the guard and go up the river to the upper end of the island we could ford the river to the north bank, but we never put it into execution because we were expecting all the time to be exchanged or paroled. On the 24th of August I wrote a letter home and left it at the commissary's unsealed to be forwarded by the next flag of truce boat. This letter was received all right, but not till a month after. The next day two or three hundred prisoners came in who had been captured from Pope's army at Cedar Mountain.<sup>5</sup>

On the 26th Durlam was taken sick with the diphtheria and died on the 4th of September. We attended him as well as we could, making crust coffee and cooking rice for him. We had the surgeon to see him, but they had no medicines. Four others died the same night, and we washed the bodies and put them in coffins and buried them about thirty rods distance of the camp, on the bank of the river. We took a piece of board and cutting his name and place of residence on it, placed it at the head of his grave.<sup>6</sup>

On the 7th of September about five hundred men were paroled. On the 9th a lot of prisoners came in, and among them was Douglas who used to be in our regiment, but now belonged to the 9th Vermont.<sup>7</sup> These new men generally had money with them and were very often robbed by a gang of bandits who infested the camp. A search was made and in the ground under the tents of some of them was found watches, money and other valuables which they had stolen. They were tried before a court martial of the prisoners and the ringleaders were sentenced to have one half of their heads shaved, which was carried out, executed without having to be approved by a higher authority. This was justice, if not law.

We kept hearing reports of being paroled and finally on the 11th of September it began and continued all day and night, and the next day. Each man's description was taken and then he signed an agreement not to take up arms against the Confederate government until duly exchanged or released. On the morning of the 13th about three thousand of us started from the island for our transports at Aikens Landing, fourteen miles from



Richmond. My feet being sore, I threw away my boots and finally my stockings. The column stretched out for a long distance, before we arrived there the cooks being strong were put ahead, while those who were sick and weak lagged behind. We arrived at the landing about dark and after being counted by Lieutenant Colonel Ludlow, our commissioner of exchange, we went on board the steamer. We had had nothing to eat since starting except for green corn and were not fed till the next morning when we received bread and coffee.

About six o'clock we started down the river and arrived at Fortress Monroe at three P.M., excepting one steamer that got aground and had to wait for the tide. Here a captain of the 2nd Maryland that had been passing himself off as a private went ashore. After remaining here about two hours we started on and steamed up Chesapeake Bay all night, arriving at Annapolis at six in the morning. We landed in the Navy Yard and marched up to the old camp ground where we were turned loose like so many cattle. There had been about three thousand paroled prisoners here before and five thousand of us arriving from Richmond made the demand for rations and tents greater than there were any means of supplying them. To add to the difficulty of the case in a few days the eleven thousand who had been surrendered at Harper's Ferry arrived and camped in the woods nearby.

The first two nights I slept in the old 5th New York horse sheds, but as I had neither overcoat, blanket, nor boots it was not very comfortable and the third night I went to a hay stack. Sergeant Warren Gibbs<sup>8</sup> of Company A drew some rations for the Vermont squad so that we had plenty to eat, but no convenience for cooking. About this time I fell in with Jacob Goodell and Amos Robinson of the 3rd Vermont who had been captured at Lewinsville the year before and they took me in and cleaned me up.<sup>9</sup> Goodell shaved me and cut my hair and loaned me some clothes while I could wash mine, and Robinson gave me some shoes which were very convenient as the ground was covered with little cockspurs.

On the 22nd the camp sutler refused to get breakfast for some privates so the boys charged on his establishment, tore it down, took everything he had, and swept the ground. The proprietor was very glad to escape with his life and what little cash he had which he thrust into a carpetbag and took with him as he ran. I presume he realized that night that one man's money is as good as another's.

At this time the ring and cross manufacturing business was carried on very extensively. Some very handsome ones were carved from beef bones, the carving being filled in with red sealing wax. On the 27th we went on board the steamer Kennebec at the Navy Yard and were taken to Alexandria where we arrived about noon the next day. A large parole camp was formed here, just west of the town, which was kept up afterwards during the war. On the 29th of September, hearing that the regiment was not far from us at Camp "Haystack," we went up there and saw what there was left of them. They had just been through Pope's campaign and were pretty well reduced in numbers, but having just been paid off seemed to feel well. The men were all glad to see us and the next day I was promoted to sergeant. From that time till the 5th of October we stayed part of the time at the parole camp and part of the time with the regiment. That day they moved their camp to near Fort Scott and all went to the regiment for good.<sup>10</sup>

After laying around camp a week or two doing nothing we concluded that we might as well improve the time and take a furlough home. Borrowing some citizen's clothes I footed it over to the Washington Depot and took the cars for New York. At Havre-de-Grace on the ferry boat a guard passed through the cars and examined the passes and furloughs of soldiers, but of course did not meddle with citizens. I arrived home in due season and remained there about a month having a good time, when I received a letter from Lieutenant Cummings saying that we were exchanged and ordered for duty. In a day or two I took the cars again and in due course of time we arrived at the camp of the regiment near Fort Scott and reported for duty.<sup>11</sup>

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Affairs With Mosby

The condition of the regiment on the first day of the new year of 1863 was as follows. We were in the subdivision of the army called the Defenses of Washington, Major General Heintzelman commanding, with headquarters on Alexandria Heights.<sup>1</sup> We were attached to a brigade of cavalry commanded by Colonel R. Butler Price of the 2nd Pennsylvania Cavalry. Our headquarters and camp was on the banks of the Potomac about half way between Long Bridge and Alexandria. Here also was the hospital, the dismounted men, the lame horses, and all the "impedimenta" of the regiment, while all, or nearly all, of the able-bodied men of the regiment were out on different points of the front line, which General Heintzelman had established for the (so called) defense of Washington. This line began about twenty miles up the Potomac from Washington and stretching around in the form of a semicircle through Dranesville, Germantown, Chantilly, Union Mills and Wolf Run Shoals came to the Potomac again near the mouth of the Occoquan. Part of the regiment was near Annandale, but the greater part was at Dranesville under command of Major William Wells, but the post there was under the command of Major Charles Taggart, who had with him a squadron of an Ohio regiment and a squadron of his own regiment, the 2nd Pennsylvania Cavalry.

While in camp near Fort Scott the project of raising a second Vermont cavalry regiment was agitated. Major John Bennett was the originator of the plan and claimed to have assurances from the Governor that if another regiment was raised in Vermont it should be a cavalry regiment and that Bennett should be the man to raise it. A number of us were to be detailed to recruit for it and of course were to receive commissions in it. The favored ones were (so far as I knew) H.B. Mitchell, T.J. Wright, Barney Decker and myself of Company D and M.A. Stone of Company F. Major Bennett was to be lieutenant colonel with a "Regular" for Colonel.<sup>2</sup>

The State of Virginia had seemed to realize the fact that the prosperity of the country in a great degree depended upon the means of communication and transportation from one place to another and although the texture of her "Sacred Soil" was such that the rains of winter made the roads very bad, she had endeavored to overcome this serious difficulty by aiding in

the construction of a series of magnificent turnpikes or macadamized highways. The truth of this will be apparent by the fact that she has in the present year (1872) offered for sale her interest in eighty-six turnpike companies, to say nothing of bridge, railroad, canal and plank road companies.

Leading westward to Winchester one from Alexandria, and the other from Chain Bridge, are two of these turnpikes which come together at Dranesville, crossing Difficult Creek about five miles east of Dranesville and Sugarland Run, Broad Run and Goose Creek west of that place before arriving at Leesburg. The camp of the regiment was at first in the fork between the two pikes, but about this time it was moved on to the knoll west of the pike, while headquarters was at a house situated just at the junction of the two roads.

Just before moving, the detachment from Annandale joined us at this place so that the available force of the regiment was nearly all here. We had picket posts on the pikes to the rear on the road to the Potomac, on the Leesburg Pike and at Thornton, Herndon and Guilford's stations on the Alexandria, Loudon and Hampshire Railroad which extended from Alexandria to Leesburg and was distant about three or four miles from us at Herndon. It was about this time that Mosby began to operate in the region. The first that we heard of him was one morning when the picket post on the Leesburg Pike came in and reported that they had been captured the night before by "Mosby," taken to near Leesburg and paroled. Mosby had effected the capture by coming up to the pickets dressed in our blue uniforms and presenting their pistols, compelled the videttes to surrender. When this was accomplished they would ride up to the reserve who suspected nothing, would allow them to approach without making any preparation, and when the reserve was all surrounded, of course would have to surrender.

This operation happened several times and on February 12th an expedition was sent out to try and break it up. We moved up the pike to near Goose Creek when we turned to the left and, moving up the creek, near Aldie struck the turnpike that runs from Alexandria through Fairfax, Aldie, Middleburg, Upperville, Paris and over the Blue Ridge at Ashby's Gap. We camped there for the night. The next day we moved up that pike several miles, then turned to the right and camped at a farm house that night. The next day it rained nearly all the time, but we moved on and entered

Leesburg in the afternoon. After stopping in the town a short time we countermarched and started for camp. The bridge across Goose Creek had been burned sometime before so that we had to go to the right a mile or so up the creek to a mill in order to cross on the stone dam. When we arrived at this ford on the night of the 14th of February it was raining and consequently quite dark, but not so much so but that we could see the white water as it tumbled over the rocks. Those in advance were loath to attempt the crossing as the water was much higher than usual, but the commanding officer, being anxious to get across if possible, we essayed the attempt. C.W. Bickford<sup>3</sup> crossed first keeping just on the top on the dam and then about ten more of us tried it. I fastened my carbine and sabre to my saddle so as to be as light as possible in case of an accident, and riding my horse into the water kept him as well up stream as possible, but I soon found he was swimming and soon arrived safe on the other shore. James L. Rush of Company D and William Roundy of Company I both went down stream over the falls, but Roundy being unencumbered caught on the bushes and got out, but Rush was drowned.<sup>4</sup> His sabre probably caught under his horse as he rolled over down the falls and prevented his escape, which he likely could have made if he had been without any load. His body was afterwards found in the Potomac by some of the 10th Vermont and buried. Roundy being wet through and the weather being cold went to a house and stayed all night. The balance of the command seeing how we fared returned to Leesburg, remained over night and came in the next day, the stream being lower. We shouted back that we were going to Dranesville under charge of Lieutenant Jacob Trussell, where we arrived about midnight in a condition better imagined than described.<sup>5</sup> We made no captures on this expedition and saw none of the enemy, except a few that we chased up into Snicker's Gap and over the ridge.

On the 18th of February another expedition was sent out and fared about the same, Lieutenant Charles Pixley of Company B being drowned in this same creek.<sup>6</sup> Soon after this ten of us (five each from D and I) went out on an independent scout. We went down across the railroad and camped that night near Gum Spring and on the next morning we charged into Aldie and seeing nothing, took the road for the Leesburg Pike and striking that, turned down it for camp. Just before dark we arrived in sight of our pickets (some of the Ohio squadron) and they fired on us, although only one of us went forward to speak to them. We went back and turning off towards the Potomac and after wandering around for several hours, came into camp at Dranesville without meeting any pickets. We found that

the camp had been alarmed and saddled up and the "patrol" sent out, as the pickets had been "attacked by about one hundred Rebels, by actual count." We made no captures except one duck that "Beauregard" found "drowning" as he says, but we established the fact that a party could come into camp without passing any of our pickets and that we really had no Picket Line!

Soon after this Major Wells drew up a statement of facts to General Heintzelman saying that there was no good natural line, but there was one at Difficult Creek, that our men were being captured all the time and requesting him to send a staff officer to "examine for himself." This was signed by all the officers of our regiment and forwarded to Headquarters. General Heintzelman returned it with the following endorsement: "Respectfully referred to Colonel R.B. Price commanding Cavalry Brigade. All communications should come through the regular channels. When General Heintzelman wants Major Wells' advice he will ask for it." Colonel Price sent it to Major Taggart and he made a great fuss about it. All the officers were called to headquarters, the document and endorsement were read and Major Wells requested to explain. He replied that as for the truth of the statements in the communication he presumed that no one would deny but that they were true and as for the informality in the forwarding of it he would say that when he went into the camp near Fort Scott, having the document with him, he was the senior officer present and consequently in command of the regiment and as such had a right to communicate with Brigade Headquarters without going through Major Taggart's inspection, that he went with it himself to Colonel Price's headquarters and Price being absent, he then carried it to General Heintzelman. Major Taggart fumed and blowed around some, but finally dismissed them all and reserved it for further consideration.<sup>7</sup>

Some of the citizens residing near Herndon Station had made a complaint that our pickets near there had been stealing from them and in the afternoon Major Wells, Captain Robert Schofield, and Lieutenant Perley Cheney went down there to investigate the matter. While there Mosby made one of his characteristic raids and "gobbled" the whole lot, picket post and all. Lieutenant Alexander Watson had command of the post with about fifty men and besides videttes to the front he had one to the rear on the road towards camp. About the time for the "Relief" to come this man on post saw a man in blue riding to him, but when he arrived close to the vidette, he pulled out his pistol and made the picket surrender. Then the

whole lot came along towards the reserve, and they thinking it was the "Relief," as it was about the time for them and they were coming from the right direction, paid no attention to them until they were all in amongst our men, when a few shots were fired, and most of the reserve and the four officers were captured. Blinn Atchison of Company A was wounded in the leg and the Rebels left him there. The rest were hurried off as fast as possible for fear of the "Relief," which soon appeared under Lieutenant Edwin Higley and followed the enemy with his booty for a short distance. Lieutenant Higley was somewhat blamed for not following up Mosby and recapturing the prisoners, but he claimed that he had not so many men as Mosby and that according to military rules, strictly speaking, he had no right to go beyond the picket post as his was a picket and not a scouting party.<sup>8</sup>

About this time Major Josiah Hall arrived and assumed command of the detachment at Dranesville. General Heintzelman becoming satisfied by the frequent capture of picket posts that something was wrong sent a staff officer to examine the situation and the result of which was that we moved back across Difficult Creek, that being the line while the camp was at Freedom Hill.

The next day after we arrived there (March 31st) there was quite a fall of damp snow and nearly all the regiment was out snowballing, none enjoying it any better than Lieutenant Woodbury. That night word was brought by a Union citizen from Herndon that Mosby was to camp at Dranesville that night, so six companies numbering about one hundred men under command of Captain Henry Flint of Company I were sent out after him. We left camp about midnight and after marching towards Dranesville for some distance, took to the left so as to arrive at the place in a different direction from that which they would be expecting us. It was supposed that they were camped around the house that had been headquarters and the command was divided into two parties, one to go around and come in on the Leesburg Pike, and the other to come up the Herndon road, and at the signal of a pistol shot, both make for the house. This was a very good plan and well carried out, but unfortunately when arriving there Mr. Mosby was gone. He had been there the evening before, but had passed along up the pike towards Leesburg. After some consultation we moved on after him. Arriving at Broad Run about five miles farther on it was found that he had turned down towards the Potomac before crossing

the Run, and we followed on straggling through the woods, along a wood road by twos, as it was not possible to march by fours.

After proceeding in this way for about three quarters of a mile, the road passed through a gate into a field and to the right, perhaps eighty rods [about a quarter of a mile] from the gate was a farm house and barn, and in and around this was Mosby and his gang. Captain Flint immediately gave the order to charge them, without closing up the column or making any formation. Lieutenant Josiah Grout suggested some such thing, but was overruled by Captain Flint, and away they went. His expectation no doubt was to surprise them, but it is generally understood now that it was not a surprise: that they had had information brought direct from the pike while we had gone some distance around. At any rate when our men rode up to the yard they were met by a sharp fire from the enemy, who shielded themselves by the high rail fence which prevented us from getting amongst them, at the same time gave them a good rest for their pistols, which they used with such good effect that Captain Flint soon fell dead with seven bullets in his body, while Lieutenant Grout was dangerously wounded in the hip and several others killed and wounded. This all happened before the balance of the column could get through the gate, and when they did get into the field they were met by the men in front coming back in confusion, followed by the enemy who being many of them dressed in our army blue could not be distinguished from our men except by their actions. It so happened that those behind could not fire without danger of hitting our own men and they were hard to distinguish from the enemy as they were both dressed alike and both going the same way.

The result was that we were soon all going out of that field and through that gate at a rate of speed full as fast as we came in, the enemy close behind and in amongst us. Through the woods towards the pike we went and what arrived there took down it towards Dranesville. The enemy followed close capturing a large number of prisoners. When about half-way there First Lieutenant Woodbury of Company B attempted to rally a few men and check the pursuit by exclaiming "Turn round boys, for God's sake and stop them, there is only a few of them." He turned around himself to meet them when a bullet pieced his brain and he fell lifeless to the earth.<sup>9</sup>



The rest of us continued along firing an occasional shot at them till within about a mile of Dranesville near our old picket post, when looking back I saw that there were several men in Blue behind me and was just holding my horse thinking there was no immediate danger, when suddenly the man nearest to me and close beside me on the right, whom I had supposed to be one of our men, sang out, "Surrender you damned Yank." I leaned over and hé fired, but instead of hitting me, his own horse fell dead on the pike and as we were going quite fast, I think he must have received a pretty severe bump. I have always supposed that he had his revolver cocked in his right hand, and when he attempted to bring it around to the other side to shoot me, just as the muzzle was opposite his horse's head the jar pulled the trigger and he shot his own horse in the head.

I passed on my way rejoicing and supposed that all danger was past, but as Lieutenant Trussell and myself were riding up the hill into Dranesville a bullet passed between us and through his overcoat and made us endeavor to press on farther. I say endeavor for when I put spurs to my horse he refused to increase his pace and I was soon surrounded and captured. The capturing party, amongst whom was Mosby himself, put me under guard and pressed on, but soon came back without making any more captures, I believe. Hendrick of Company D was captured, but having one of the gray overcoats that we received at Burlington was taken to be one of their men and escaped to the woods.<sup>10</sup> Lieutenant Eli Holden of Company C was scalped, a sabre taking off quite a large fragment of skin from the back of his head.<sup>11</sup> As we were going to the rear as prisoners we met him going to Dranesville after a surgeon, the Rebels seeing that he was wounded, and not knowing his rank, allowing him to go. He was very much afraid that someone would address him by his title, but none happened to.

Lieutenant Grout of Company I was supposed to be mortally wounded and was left in the house. Lieutenant John Sawyer of Company B was wounded and captured. The net results of the expedition were as follows: Two officers and six men killed, three officers and nineteen men wounded (and of course captured) and about eighty men missing, and three Rebels wounded and one killed.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the reasons that led to this disastrous result are as follows: instead of we having the enemy at a disadvantage, they had the advantage in that they were protected by a high rail fence. One of Mosby's men told

that he saw one of our men, Sergeant Ferry of Company I, do the bravest thing he ever saw.<sup>13</sup> That was that he rode up to the fence and tried some time to throw it down while there were twenty men on the other side firing their revolvers at him. Second, our horses had not been fed very well for the last week and had been under the saddle for several hours without having been fed since last night, consequently more were run down and captured than would have been if the enemy's horses had been no fresher than ours. Third, we had been riding some time, the weather was quite cold, our fingers were numb, and consequently we could not handle and fire our revolvers and carbines with the rapidity of men who had not been exposed to the weather. Fourth, the enemy, or a great many of them, were dressed in our "Army Blue" and fifth, and greatest of all, was in not closing up the column and having some "formation" and "plan" of attack.<sup>14</sup> There was some talk about the "reserve" not coming to the "support," but according to my observations, there was no "reserve" and all came in to the field as fast as possible. Captain George H. Bean of Company G was second in command and was one of the few who escaped. The government needed a "scapegoat" and accordingly an order was issued dismissing him from the service to date from April 1st, the day of the fight.<sup>15</sup>

Mosby collected his prisoners together just beyond Broad Run and moving along the pike to near Goose Creek, took up the creek and across the country till we struck the "Aldie" pike near Middleburg, and after proceeding along that for a few miles, turned to the left again and striking across lots finally, just before dark, we crossed the Manassas Gap Railroad near Rectortown, passed up a steep hill and camped near or around a large house. All the men that had horses were allowed to ride, but those that were afoot had quite a hard time except as we changed off with them. I estimated the distance we traveled from the time we left camp till we reached this point to be about sixty miles. They told us that we were fifteen miles from Warrenton, but we were in sight of two villages. The house was quite a large one, and surrounded by a picket fence enclosing perhaps an acre. We were collected together on the outside of the yard next to the fence and a guard placed around us in the form of a semicircle reaching from the corner to the gateway in the center of the front of the house.

About ten o'clock P.M. they gave us some hoe cake and pork and we passed a not very uncomfortable night. Lieutenant Sawyer and a few others who were slightly wounded were allowed to stay in the house along

with the greater part of the Rebels. Philbrook of Company D moralized a little on the fact that "we might consider ourselves situated in such a way as not tending to promote the greatest amount of good feeling and contentedness with one's lot."<sup>16</sup> In the morning Mosby's men came in amongst us and passed out again as they had a mind to, talking and arguing with us on the situation. I noticed that a great many of them had on blue overcoats, black hats, with pants in boots, which was just the same as I had on and I observed to myself that of a hundred and twenty-five of our regiment I should not know them all by sight and perhaps our guard might be the same.

Acting on this thought I walked by the guard into the yard by the front gate and around the house into the back door. Here I met a man who seemed to know that I was a "Yankee" as he asked me "What do you want?" I replied that "I wanted something to eat" to which he answered that "We are agoing to feed you uns all soon" but that I could go in to the house and get something. I went in and there was Dick Moran strutting about with a bugle that he had captured.<sup>17</sup> I ate what "hog and hominy" I wanted and putting some into my pocket, came out of the house, and upon looking around saw that no one in particular was watching me, but I noticed that a path led from the end of the house towards the railroad and at the fence some pickets were off, so that I could crawl through. Bringing to mind all the stories I had ever read about prisoners escaping and asking myself if I could not do it as well as anyone else I started down away from the house, crawled through the fence, and keeping my head straight to the front I walked down the hill. I expected every minute to be fired at, but thinking "nothing risked, nothing gained" continued on my way and after going about one half mile crossed the railroad in the valley and into the woods beyond where I was, for the first time, out of sight.

After going up the hill some distance in the west I thought I heard a man moving near me, and dodging behind a tree, remained there without stirring for half an hour or more, hugging the tree as close as possible. Hearing nothing more I started on traveling by the sun, avoiding the highways and keeping on the roads. I was striking for the "Aldie" Pike and when I reached it I intended to keep down it to Fairfax, not directly on the pike, but guiding by it. About noon of the first day I struck a deep stream and went down it some distance to find a log to cross on, but soon came in sight of a mill, which I did not care to visit, as I thought very likely that I should not find friends there. Turning back, I proceeded up stream some

ways, and taking off my boots and stockings and rolling up my pants, waded across. I disliked to get water in my boots, as I had a long walk before me and that would tend to make my feet sore. Just on the other side of the stream was a road and beyond the road a high ledge all parallel so that I could not strike off into the woods, but had to go along the road some distance. Taking my boots in my hand I walked along, but had gone but a short distance when I saw a person coming towards me on horse-back. My heart came up into my throat as there was no turning out and if I went back, I should soon come to the mill. So I continued straight along. He proved to be a Virginia farmer going to the mill with his grist behind. I said "Good morning" and he replied "It's a very fine day, sir" and both of us passed on our way. As soon as he was out of sight I took into the woods and for a mile or so I made good time and then arriving at a thick place in the forest sat down and rested.

I continued on during the day meeting one or two colored persons and just as night arrived in sight of Aldie, and for the first time knew just where I was. Remembering the blacksmith of Company H, I did not think it advisable to go through the village, but keeping up on the hill to the right, found some wheat stacks which cattle had eaten into all around. I crawled in, ate some hoe cakes, spread my overcoat over, pulled some straw over that, and passed a very comfortable night. There were a few rats and mice that disturbed me some by running over me, but that was all.

In the morning after dining rather sparingly, I started on and keeping some distance to the right of the pike, had to pass over the top of the Catoctin Mountains, through which ridge the pike and Little River both pass here in a narrow gap that the creek in ages past had worn for itself. Just as I arrived at the top the sun rose and being "well up in the world" the prospect before me was grand in the extreme. Passing down on the other side I continued on towards Fairfax, crossing the pike twice where it passed through woods, and taking a good look both ways before venturing across. Along in the afternoon I arrived near Chantilly, and seeing some cavalry in the pike ahead, I took off the right for some ways. I knew that our pickets had been there, but as our part of the line had been drawn back, did not know but that this might have been also, and as I knew that I was but a few miles from Fairfax, and so nearly safe. I wanted to be sure. Making a detour of a mile or so after passing an old railroad grade, I was walking along through the woods, when suddenly I found myself near the

reserve to an infantry picket post. The line of videttes I had passed without seeing it. I immediately noticed that their uniforms were blue, and walking up to them found they were some of the 25th Maine, Colonel Fessenden.<sup>18</sup>

They were somewhat surprised to see me and wanted to know where I came from, to which I replied that I had just escaped from Mosby. They wanted to know how I got away, to which I replied that I walked away, which I thought explained it as well as anything I could say. They were hardly satisfied and when they were relieved took me to Colonel Fessenden, who was commanding the brigade. He asked a great many questions all about my capture and escape, the capital of Vermont, and so forth. Finally I was sent to the guard house where I remained till the next day after guard mounting, when I was sent to the Provost Marshal at Fairfax Court House, along with some Virginia refugees. The Provost Marshal heard my story and sent me to General Stahel, commanding our division of cavalry, who after hearing what I had to say sent me to the camp of the regiment, which was nearby to the west of the pike.<sup>19</sup>

A short time before this General Stahel had been assigned to the command of all the cavalry in the Defenses of Washington and he had moved the camp to near Fairfax and divided it into three small brigades, which the addition of several new Michigan regiments made possible. The arrangement was as follows:

1st Brigade under Colonel R. B. Price, 2nd Pennsylvania, and 18th Pennsylvania.

2nd Brigade under Colonel DeForrest, 1st Vermont, 5th New York, and 1st Michigan.

3rd Brigade under Colonel Gray, 5th Michigan, 6th Michigan, and 7th Michigan.

I spent a few days in camp, visited the 2nd Vermont Brigade at Union Mills and then rejoined the men at Freedom Hill. The men who had remained prisoners were marched afoot from where I left them to Culpeper (stopping overnight at Amissville) where they took the cars and in due course of time arrived at Richmond and were quartered in the Hotel "Libby." Fortune so favored them that within a few days they were paroled

and exchanged within a month or so, and all returned to the camp at Fairfax.<sup>20</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel William Grout of the 15th Vermont came to "Freedom Hill" and procuring an ambulance and some escort, went out to Broad Run under a flag of truce and brought back Lieutenant Grout. He was thought to be fatally injured, but finally recovered sufficiently to enter the Frontier Cavalry. He was promoted to be captain of Company I, but never took command of the company.<sup>21</sup>

When I arrived at the camp near Freedom Hill I found it moved back about a mile and some of the 6th Michigan there, the post being commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Alger and the line for a distance under Colonel Gray of the 5th Michigan Cavalry.<sup>22</sup> In a few days we were moved back to near our first camp grounds at Union Church and guards established around the camp, so that we could not go out for water without a pass from Lieutenant Colonel Alger. The reason for this as we thought was to compel us to purchase of the Michigan sutler, who was inside the guard, while there were several shops outside that sold much lower. This was invading our rights in a way that we did not like and great indignation was expressed there at. One night soon after the sutler's tent fell down and most of his goods disappeared and for several days after Lieutenant Colonel Alger, pretending to fear a mutiny, kept some of his men in line to quiet it. One of his guards also fired at one of the 1st Vermont who did not stop soon enough to suit him, which added fresh fuel to the flame. Soon after the obnoxious sutler left, the guards were more lax in enforcing the orders, and peace was established.

The pickets were sent out for two days at a time, and the videttes remained on post four hours each with relief. This was not according to "Regulations," but as the weather was generally good, it brought no great amount of hardship. The Michigan officers were generally quite green and were strict about enforcing orders in regard to foraging and started not to allow grazing on private fields, but they got bravely over this before autumn. Beaugregard and L. P. Howland<sup>23</sup> went over Difficult Creek scouting and on their return reported that Mosby was camped over there. Lieutenant Colonel Alger affected not to believe this and even talked of sending them into General Stahel for plundering citizens as some of the officers alleged. But some time afterwards an English officer who was serving with Mosby was killed<sup>24</sup> and in his diary was an entry on the very

day reported by Beauregard and Howland to the following effect: "that they were camped near the Federal line near Difficult Creek, that they had come there with the intention of making a raid inside of our lines, but the creek was so high from recent rains that it was not thought advisable to cross and so it was deferred."

We remained in this camp till about the middle of June and everything considered it was the best place we were ever in. The weather was generally good, the trees were leaved out so as to form a nice shade, we had plenty of rations and forage so that men and horses grew fat, and we were just far enough from the city of Washington that we were not all the time wanting to go into it. Our duty was not severe and when we left we were well aware that it was doubtful if we ever landed in as good quarters again, and I think we never did.

Lieutenant Colonel Preston returned from Vermont where he had been buying horses in May and soon after he was sent out to near Manassas Junction with part of the regiment that was in camp. On the 30th of May a freight train on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad going out to our forces near Warrenton Junction and "guarded" by a detachment of the 15th Vermont was thrown from the track and captured by Mosby near Catlett's Station. Mosby, knowing about the time the train was coming, had concealed his force in ambush nearby and then having loosened a rail and fastened a wire to it waited for the train to arrive. When the engine was nearly on the rail it was suddenly jerked out and off the track the engine went and at the same time his howitzer pierced its boiler with two shells. The Rebels in ambush immediately opened fire and the train guard were ordered to "fix bayonets" and charge, but unfortunately in the wrong direction, and by reason of this sad mistake soon placed a safe distance between themselves and the omnipresent Mosby.<sup>25</sup> He turned his attention to burning the cars and so on, which useful business he was engaged in when all of a sudden some one interfered. The detachment of Vermont Cavalry at Kettle Run under Lieutenant Colonel Preston hearing the firing had saddled up and moving out as fast as possible caused Mr. Mosby to leave his cars and take safety in flight. Our men followed up as fast as possible and so close that at near Greenwich he made a stand. Finding a place where our men would have to move up a narrow lane he posted his artillery so as to rake it and his cavalry as support. When our men came up they charged on it and quite a spirited fight ensued.

He fired his howitzer twice loaded with cannister, the first time aimed too low and struck the ground in front, but the second time he was more successful, sending a charge of cannister through the ranks, killing Sergeant Job Corey of Company H and wounding several others, but this was the last shot, before he could load and fire again, our men were in and amongst him and he fled ingloriously, leaving the gun in our men's hands. He was followed for some distance and several of his men captured and killed, amongst them the notorious Dick Moran, who was shot in the throat but lived some time.<sup>26</sup>

This is the report written by Lieutenant Colonel Preston:

Adjutant General Washburn<sup>27</sup>

Sir:

I have the honor to report that on the morning of the 30th inst. Major Mosby and 100 men and one 12 lb. Howitzer attacked a train of cars six miles from here. Hearing the 1st shot fired, in 10 minutes, 125 of the 1st Vermont Cavalry were in their saddles and galloping to the scene of action, where we arrived in 30 minutes. With some difficulty we found the trail through the thick pine woods, and came up with them, about 3 miles distant, where a slight skirmish ensued, the Rebels retreating to a position some 2 miles distant, hotly pursued. The position here selected was one of the strongest kind, it was to top of a hill, the road to which led up a defile with embankments on each side, while strong fences and thick woods prevented a quick flank movement. At the head of this gorge Mosby had planted his gun and formed his men in line in rear. Having been joined by a detachment of the 5th New York Cavalry they made a brilliant dash on the rebel position, but after a desperate struggle were obliged to retire, leaving many brave men upon the field. A charge was now ordered upon their front and right flank. With a shout Company H, Lieutenant Hazelton and Company C, Sergeant Hill<sup>28</sup> charged up the narrow road, meeting a terrible storm of grape and shell. The rebels fought their piece with desperation, firing their last shot after they were surrounded by our men, which shot passed through a horse not 20 feet from the gun and wounded several men. Lieutenant



Chapman (rebel)<sup>29</sup> never left his gun, but with his revolver wounded several men in hand to hand fight. He was wounded twice and captured. Mosby got through the woods closely pursued, leaving his artillery and gunners in our possession. We recaptured the mail taken from the cars and many other things with several prisoners. Lieutenant Hazelton, Company H and Sergeant Hill, Company C deserve much praise. Sergeant Corey was killed beside the gun and his brother wounded.<sup>30</sup> Men could do no more. As a feat of daring it has not been exceeded during the war. The gun has been sent to General Stahel's Hd. Qrs. by order.

Very truly, your obedient servant

A.W. Preston, Lt. Col.

Commanding detachment 1st Vermont Cavalry

## CHAPTER NINE

### The Gettysburg Campaign

About the middle of June the Rebel Army began its movement into Maryland and Pennsylvania, moving from Fredericksburg by way of Culpeper, Chester's Gap, Winchester and Hagerstown, passing over nearly the same ground that we had the year before, only in the opposite direction. Ewell's Corps had gone ahead while Longstreet's had gone more to the right to occupy Snicker's and Ashby's gaps. Lee's cavalry under Stuart was covering his right flank while Hooker had moved the Army of the Potomac on inner lines, so as to keep between the enemy and Washington. This soon brought it all nearly in the Defenses of Washington so that the large force under General Heintzelman was incorporated in that army and mostly remained with it during the balance of its existence. This also made our picketing unnecessary and we were all ordered into the camp at Fairfax.

Colonel Sawyer was here, but was sick and off duty. He had several promotions that he desired to make, but Lieutenant Colonel Preston declined to issue the order. The arrangement was for Colonel Sawyer to issue the order announcing the promotions putting the officers on duty according to their rank and then send the names to the governor for commissions, so Colonel Sawyer did not send his name to the surgeon one day and accordingly was on duty and in command of the regiment. He then issued his order appointing William G. Cummings as captain, Jacob Trussell as first lieutenant and H.B. Mitchell as second lieutenant, that is ranking up.<sup>1</sup> This was the occasion of the celebrated feud between the two which continued till Colonel Sawyer saw fit to resign in April 1864. He however did not send the names to the governor (Holbrook) as he was not on good terms with him (arising from former recommendations having been not very satisfactory, especially in the cases of Adjutant Gates, whom he had imported fresh from Vermont, and Lieutenant Newton, who had been recommended for captain of Company A<sup>2</sup>) and was waiting till Governor Smith came in and then have the commissions dated back.<sup>3</sup> This last omission worked bad for some as will appear.

For Colonel Sawyer being called away to Washington "by painful but unavoidable necessity" on the 22nd of June, Lieutenant Colonel Preston

was in command most of the time except from July 10th to 25th and August 22nd to September 12th, when Colonel Sawyer was with us.<sup>4</sup> About August 1st an order was received to send several officers and men to Vermont to assist in taking conscripts to the field, and Lieutenant Cummings was detailed from our regiment. As no commissions had been received, the first thing Lieutenant Cummings did on arriving in Vermont was to go to the Adjutant General's Office and there learned that no recommendations had been received. Lieutenant Colonel Preston was informed of this and immediately sent on recommendations for Cummings and Trussell as Sawyer had appointed, but instead of Mitchell he recommended Sergeant J. H. Moore<sup>5</sup> and in due course of time (September) the commissions arrived. By this time the company was too small to muster a second lieutenant so that Lieutenant Moore did not get mustered till next February. Mitchell was acting as lieutenant, hiring a waiter and the like, but in reality was only first sergeant of Company D. He was on Sawyer's staff while Sawyer commanded the brigade and was detailed to Vermont to assist in recruiting during the winter, but finally came back to the regiment, but was commissioned as second lieutenant of Company I in March 1864, after reenlisting as a "Veteran." Lieutenant Moore also reenlisted as a Veteran in the winter, had his furlough, and was mustered on January 22nd, 1864 on a commissioned dated June 1st, 1863.

On the 17th day of June the whole regiment was in camp at Fairfax Court House but was sent out on a reconnaissance to Warrenton under Colonel Sawyer. The cavalry is the Eyes of the army, and it was desirable to see and know what was passing in that direction as the Rebel Army had been seen moving up the river from Fredericksburg while a large force under Ewell had overwhelmed Milroy at Winchester. We left camp and marching along the turnpike through Centerville and over the Stone Bridge and Bull Run battlefield ran on the Rebel picket in the afternoon, about two miles from Warrenton. We afterwards learned that Wade Hampton's Legion was passing through Warrenton to join Ewell and A. P. Hill in the Valley.

Skirmishers were deployed mounted and we slowly drove them back, their shots whistling and ricocheting down the pike very uncomfortably. When we got over the brow of the hill a heavy shower came up, but we continued to drive them back, although we saw a heavy column descending the hill from the town. Finally we were ordered back and I was sent to call in some of our skirmishers on the left who could be made to hear.

While near the left of the line we saw those on the pike put spurs to their horses and go back much faster than they came up and looking to the right saw a large force of the enemy's cavalry coming in behind us on a by road. We put spurs to our horses and the Rebels did the same, but we passed the point where the roads came together about four rods ahead of the Rebels and joined the company just over the knoll, although they fired their pistols quite freely and hallooed to surrender. They followed down the pike to the top of the knoll, but we (Companies D and I) had rallied here and returned quite a sharp fire, so that they were glad to retire. This engagement is not down in the Adjutant General's Report, but I think it may well be counted in place of "Ridley's Shop, June 30th, which last named I doubt very much if we had anything to do with, or even if there was any engagement there."<sup>6</sup>

We moved back to Centerville that night where we arrived about midnight and held our horses in the column till morning, some one being too lazy to give the order to dismount and hitch up.

The next day we returned to Fairfax where we found a large part of the Army of the Potomac camped around there, especially the Sixth and Twelfth Corps and Reserve Artillery, and were visited by many of the Vermont Brigade.

On the 17th, 20th and 21st the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac had a series of fights with the enemy's infantry and cavalry at Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville and our whole division under General Stahel made another reconnaissance to Warrenton on the 21st of June. The first night we camped near Centerville and the next day pushed on to Warrenton, which place we occupied without any resistance. Longstreet and Stuart being farther to the right, while Hill's Corps, which left Fredericksburg on the 13th, had passed over into the Valley via Chester's Gap. We took position southwest of the town where we remained all night and returned to Fairfax the next day. Reliable intelligence being received that Ewell had crossed the border, we were also ordered to cross the Potomac, and leaving camp on the 26th of June, moved to near our all old picket post just beyond Dranesville, where we camped for the night. We numbered six hundred men for duty, which was more than we ever had before or since.<sup>7</sup> The horses and arms were in good condition, the "morale" of the men was excellent and taking everything into consideration I doubt if there was a more efficient regiment in the service. The next day we moved

to near Edward's Ferry and forded the river, the pontoon bridges being used for the infantry, who were also crossing just above us.

While waiting for those ahead to cross, Major Wells rode ahead to see how it was done and coming back reported that "only five per cent were drowned." The river was wide and the current rather swift, but no mishaps occurred. We camped that night near Poolsville in a hard shower and the next day crossed the Monocacy, and moving by way of Jefferson and Crampton's Gap over the South Mountain and camped near Rohersville. On the sides of the road as it passes through the gap we saw the graves of the men who had been killed the year previously just before Antietam. We found plenty of wheat here and began to feed our horses on it, which caused the Maryland farmers to complain greatly thereat. This seemed to be a great country for whiskey, for more men were drunk in the brigade then were ever before, and it was never equaled since but once, which was on the first days on March 1865 when we were on the march from Winchester to White House.

After remaining here two days we started in the afternoon and moving back over the gap we took the road north to Middletown, where we struck the National Turnpike and turning to the right we passed through Frederick City about midnight, camping two miles out. Between Frederick and our camp I fell asleep and the first I was aware of it I was sprawling on the pike. I jumped up and mounted my horse without stopping him and proceeded on unhurt, although I have no doubt but that if I had been awake, I should have been severely injured. Frederick City was then the Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, and now we belonged to it.

"Napoleon has said that the commander of an army is everything, it was not the Roman army that conquered Gaul, but Caesar's, it was not the Cartaginian army that thundered at the Gates of Rome, but Hannibal's, it was not the Prussian army that withstood the combined powers of Europe for seven years, but Frederick's, this was not the case with the Army of the Potomac." We never had a leader of great genius and the victories we won were paid for by a great expenditure of Blood. Often it had changed its leader and now we were to change again. We never had the blind confidence in our leaders that lead soldiers on to great achievements, only belief that our cause would ultimately triumph and that cause was the Union. General Hooker had desired to evacuate Harper's Ferry and use the 13,000 men there under General French to better advantage than had been

done the year before, but General Halleck thought differently. The result was that on the 27th of June Hooker requested to be relieved and the next day the request was granted and Major General George G. Meade, then in command of the Fifth Corps, was assigned to the command of the "Army of the Potomac." We had no particular knowledge of the change, but did know of some nearer to us.

General Stahel was relieved of the command of our division, which was now the Third Division of the Cavalry Corps, and General Judson Kilpatrick assigned to his place.<sup>8</sup> General Stahel called the officers out and taking farewell departed from us to win renown on a court martial in Baltimore. Our three brigades were consolidated into two and General Elon Farnsworth assigned to the command of the First and General George Armstrong Custer to the Second. Our brigade (the First) was composed of the 1st Vermont, 5th New York, 18th Pennsylvania, 1st West Virginia, and 2nd Pennsylvania.<sup>9</sup> The Second Brigade was composed of the 1st, 5th, 6th, and 7th Michigan regiments. This policy of associating together regiments from the same state was not generally practiced, but when it was the results seemed to prove the efficiency of the plan. For we all think the Old Vermont Brigade was the best brigade of infantry in the army and of the cavalry there was none better than this Michigan Brigade. Or to express about the same idea as John Morse<sup>10</sup> who said, "I think the 1st Vermont is the best Regiment in the service and the 6th Michigan next."

On the 29th of June the army moved. Buford's First Cavalry Division moving towards the left towards Gettysburg, while we marched nearly north, passing the Twelfth Corps on the road and before night we were across the border and in Pennsylvania. Just at dusk we entered the little village of Littlestown and we began to see the differences between campaigning in an enemy's country or amongst friends. On a balcony were a large number of young ladies singing the "Star Spangled Banner," "Red, White and Blue" and other patriotic songs as we passed. They furnished us with more substantial aid in the way of eatables. We camped near there that night, but moved on in good season the next morning. Just before noon we reached Hanover, Pennsylvania and halted in the streets. The good people brought out food of all kinds, such as pie, cake, coffee and so forth, and we were enjoying ourselves immensely when suddenly some distance behind us bang went cannon. Some one says "the folks are firing a salute in honor of our arrival." Just then the Shell burst and we came to

the conclusion that people didn't generally fire Shells for a salute, and then "there was a mounting in hot haste" and the column moved on at a walk.

This was an attack by Stuart's cavalry and happened in this way. When Lee crossed into Maryland he left Stuart on the east of the Blue Ridge with orders to annoy the enemy as much as possible while it was crossing the Potomac and then crossing into Maryland take position on the right of the Rebel column, where he could be in position to hide the movements of the Rebel infantry. Stuart probably did not think it advisable to meddle with us much, but after we were all over he crossed the Potomac at Rowser's Ford and passing in sight of Washington was marching across the country to join Lee, who was supposed to be at Chambersburg. Here at Hanover he ran on to the rear of our column and a fight ensued, the ultimate results of which had an important bearing on the events of the next few days.

He began to capture our ambulances, stragglers, and so on, and those that he did not get began to run by us. I think a squad of Company A claim to have checked the first onset of the enemy, but the first thing I knew about it, nearly all the stragglers had passed us as we moved slowly on till just as we were near the toll gate we saw the enemy's column appear with a battle flag at the head. The order was given to our Squadron (Companies D and M) to "Right about wheel" which we did. Curtis<sup>11</sup> fired at them, but the adjutant says "don't fire, they are our men." Curtis says "our men don't carry that flag." Then the order was given to charge and away we went. The Rebel column had come some distance and were pretty well scattered, so that they turned and fled back through the town and we after them. James Wright<sup>12</sup> rode down one Rebel and captured him with his sabre swinging over his head. Lieutenant Colonel Payne<sup>13</sup> of a Virginia regiment (from Warrenton) and in command of the regiment that engaged us (the 2nd North Carolina) was dismounted in the town and running afoot across a tan yard fell into a vat. Crawling out, he hid in the loft of a barn and drawing his pistol waited the turn of events. Soon one of our men stuck his head up and Payne clapped his pistol to it, made him surrender and hauled him up. By and by, soon after this, Silas B. Kingsley<sup>14</sup> stuck his head up, and seeing how things stood, dodged back again. Lieutenant Colonel Payne, now seeing that the game was up, told his man that seeing he had been so polite as to surrender to him, he would return the compliment and Paine gave up his arms to him and they both came

down and in due course of time Payne was turned over to the Provost Marshal.

Our men followed the North Carolinians out of town, but there the rest of the column was met and quite a severe fight ensued. The balance of the brigade passed just through the town and formed a line facing the enemy. General Kilpatrick rode along and made a short address, while General Farnsworth said nothing, but attended to business. The other brigade was several miles ahead. The Rebel battle flag was captured by one of the 5th New York.<sup>15</sup> Part of the brigade was sent through the town to engage the enemy there, but seeing a force of the enemy endeavoring to turn our left, Major Bennett (who had lately returned to the regiment) was sent with his battalion to check them. We were deployed as skirmishers and some were engaged pretty lively. The Rebels threw down the fences as though making ready for a charge, and then their skirmishers mounted up. We followed suit and prepared to meet them, but before long they disappeared, and upon our advancing out on our left some distance we found them gone and no trace except tracks in the road. When we returned to town, which we did soon after and passed the night nearby, we found they had disappeared from our whole front. Stuart had withdrawn in the direction of York and by means of this flight and the pursuit we made on the first of July, he was prevented from joining Lee till the second, and then not in very good condition.

Some people, especially that body of Vermont lawyers (who understand the art of self glorification better than any other persons I have ever heard of) called the Second Vermont Brigade are very fond of showing what would have been the result if they had not been posted so as to assist in the repulse of Pickett on the third of July when he surged against the Second Corps, forming the high tide of the Rebellion, showing conclusively that the cause of the Union would have gone up if it had not been for them. I propose to show that the 1st Vermont Cavalry had quite as much to do with the result at Gettysburg as any other single body of troops, but to tell the truth we all had something to do about it.

The position at Gettysburg was naturally very strong, both in position and shape, which was carved like a horse shoe. Longstreet and Hill left the neighborhood of Chambersburg on the 29th of June and engaged Buford and Reynolds a mile west of the town of Gettysburg on the 1st of July. Our force gained some advantage and were then driven back in confusion



through Gettysburg, but seized the position east of the town and held it ever afterwards. The distance Longstreet and Hill had to pass from Chambersburg to Gettysburg was about twenty miles and they were two days making it, while our Sixth Corps marched thirty-two miles on the 2nd of July. If the Rebels had pressed forward faster they could have occupied this commanding position without resistance on our part, or if their column had been well closed up, as they should be in the presence of the enemy, they would have driven our shattered forces from Cemetery Hill as easily as they had driven them through Gettysburg. Why the town and Gettysburg would have been a lost battle. Why did this happen? General Lee in his official report says that it was on account of his ignorance of the movement of our army, an ignorance due to the absence of Stuart's cavalry (the vigilant eyes of the Confederate Army). Stuart was on his way to join Lee when he struck our rear at Hanover and would no doubt have reached him that day, and of course he knew all about the position of our army. The firm stand made by our regiment at Stuart's first onset prevented his breaking through, which if he had accomplished he would have passed on his way and we would have had a stern chase after him and might have inflicted some damage, but that would not have prevented the communication of valuable information. As it was he had to make a detour of two days and when he did arrive Lee knew very well where the Army of the Potomac was, even if he did try to encourage his men by telling them that they had nothing to fight but Pennsylvania militia.

After going into camp that night we went into town and were well fed by the inhabitants. In the morning we turned over by order of General Heintzelman all our impedimenta such as curry combs, brushes, and various other things which were deposited in a barn and never heard of afterwards. We moved on in a northerly direction and passing a barn that had been shattered by the explosion of a caisson that belonged to the other brigade the day before and arrived in Abbottstown, where we crossed the road that Ewell had just passed over as he was retiring from York to concentrate at Gettysburg.<sup>16</sup> We captured several stragglers who had imbibed too much "Tanglefoot" and overslept. The inhabitants were very much frightened and were running their horses off to the woods, taking us for the Rebels. We rode through Berlin and towards night ran into the rear of Stuart. Chester Orr and James Wright were some distance ahead and seeing some Rebel stragglers come out of a house, made for them and the "Johnnies" taking the alarm, dropped the bread they had foraged and fled.<sup>17</sup> Our men captured the bread and had it for supper that night.

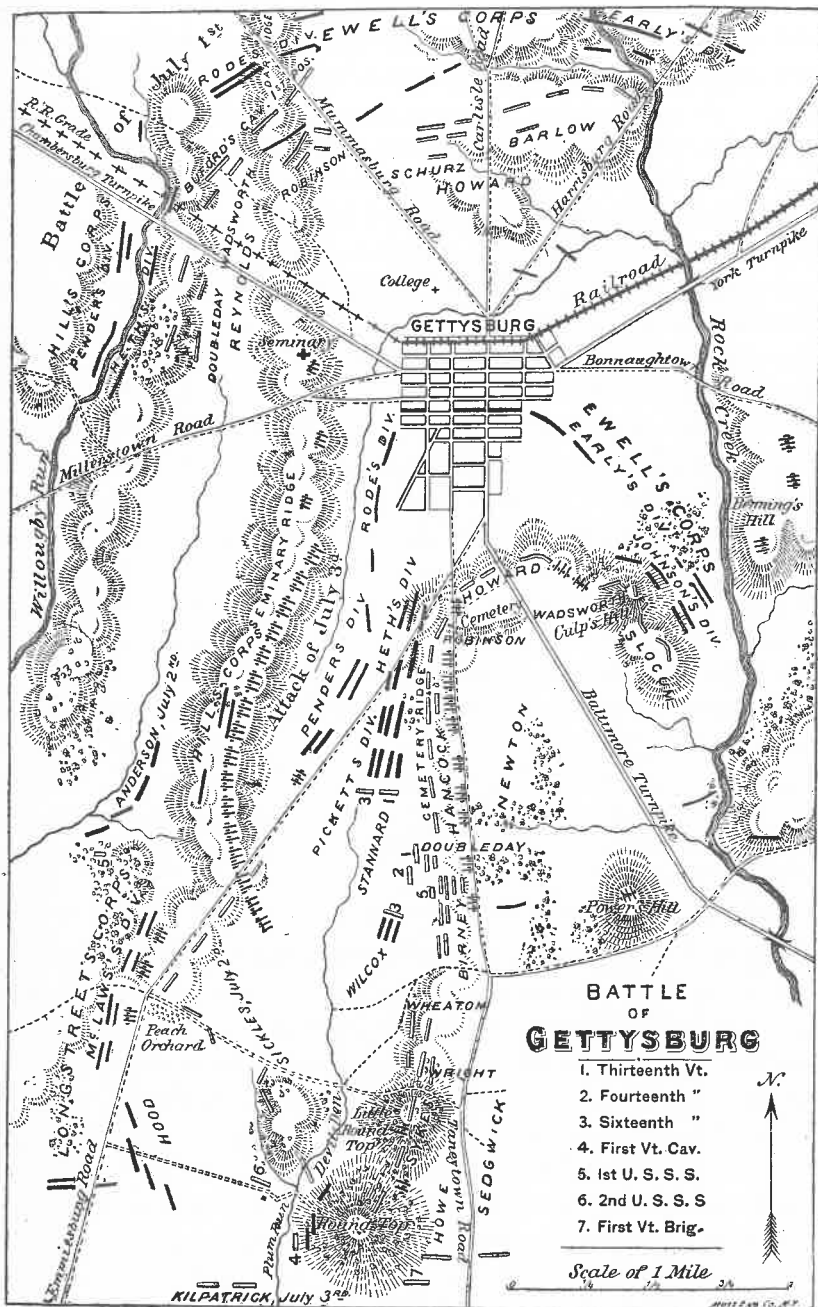
We were following up Stuart under direction of Colonel Alexander of General Pleasonton's staff, but as Stuart had been marching all night and gradually making west, it was discovered that we could not head him off, and also Buford and Reynolds had discovered that the Rebel Army was at Gettysburg, so we were recalled from the pursuit and ordered to report to headquarters near the town of Gettysburg. We took along with us from the bridge across Conewago Creek for some distance one or two farmers, who thinking we were "Johnnies" had called themselves "Copperheads," expecting to receive better treatment, but we soon undeceived them and as a slight punishment took them along. Soon after dark at a crossroads we found a man with a bushel basket full of boiled eggs, which he wished to give us and we found them very acceptable. Indeed, all through this campaign we lived quite well, getting plenty of milk, eggs, soft bread, and apple butter. We drew some rations, mostly sugar and coffee, but very irregular and our horses lived almost entirely on the country. Some of our wagons started from Fairfax loaded with grain and never took any off except to feed their own horses.

Late in the evening we rejoined the balance of the division and camped for the night. We moved on in good season and struck the railroad from Hanover to Gettysburg during the forenoon, passing several smoking ruins of depots burned by the enemy. Soon the sound of artillery broke on our ears which continued growing louder and louder till about noon we arrived quite close to Gettysburg, so near that we could see the smoke from the battlefield, but could not see the combatants. General Kilpatrick reported to General Pleasonton and was ordered to make a demonstration on our extreme right. While we were waiting for these orders a report was circulated that McClellan was in command of the army, but it did not obtain much credence. It probably arose from the fact that Hooker had been relieved and somebody guessed that McClellan was reinstated, the wish, perhaps, being father to the thought.

Moving off to the right we marched till about sundown, when we passed through the little village of Hunterstown, where the road forked and here we found a Rebel picket, while up on the knoll on the left hand road was posted quite a force of the enemy's cavalry. Up this road the 6th Michigan charged and were soon engaged in a fierce combat with the enemy, while our regiment and a section of a battery charged up the other road, till we arrived on the knoll opposite the combatants on the other road, when we jumped from our horses, and tearing down the fence, ran

the guns through by hand. I myself lifted on the wheel. They fired two charges of cannister into the ranks of the Rebel cavalry, but before they could load and fire again, the Rebels were gone. The guns were so close to them that I have no doubt but that the execution was fearful. We then turned our attention to our front, forming a skirmish line in front of the guns in the wheatfield. The "Johnnies" fired a few shots from their artillery, which fell harmlessly in the wheat before us, and then General Kilpatrick came along and ordered the battery to fire away for some time. "Pitch a lot of shell over in there so as to make them believe that there is a hell of a lot of us here." This was complied with for an hour or so, and then we remained quiet for some time till about 11 P.M., when the troops began retiring. The wounded of both sides were placed in a house near the forks of the road and our regiment was the last to leave. Company D formed the rear and I had the rear guard squad and our principal duties were to awaken stragglers who had gone off the side of the road and gone to sleep. Several of these came on to the road behind us, following along and we came near firing at them, supposing the enemy to be following us up.<sup>18</sup>

We marched all night, passing very near the rear and left flank of Ewell's Corps, which at that time occupied some of our works on Culp's Hill. About 3 A.M. we heard some heavy volleys of musketry which took place at the time Geary's Division of the Twelfth Corps was driving them out. At daylight we arrived on the Baltimore Turnpike and halted for two or three hours while the general was reporting and receiving orders. We fed our horses, made coffee and some of us took a nap. We found here the headquarters wagons of the 2nd Vermont Brigade and I saw several men that I knew. The houses and barns were full of wounded and amongst them I recalled one artillery man who had been blown up by a caisson. His eyes were out, his hair and eyebrows were burned off, he was as black as powder and fire could make him, and still he lived. Whether he ultimately recovered or not I do not know, but it was a hard case. We could get no water within half a mile as there were guards on all the wells to save the water for the wounded. We also learned that the infantry had seen hard fighting and suffered fearful losses, (it exceeded twenty thousand then) and that Reynolds was killed and Sickles wounded.



## THE VERMONT TROOPS AT GETTYSBURG

About 9 A.M. we received orders to proceed to our extreme left and make an attack, the other brigade remaining on the right. The shape of our line being curved enabled us to shift from one flank to the other much quicker than the enemy as we could go across the rear of our forces in a straight line, while he had to go around. Proceeding up the turnpike across Rock Creek, we passed the 2nd Division Sixth Corps headquarters wagons and turning to the left, soon struck the Taneytown Road, which we followed two or three miles till we reached Rock Creek again, where we watered our horses and turned back. After marching in this direction for some distance we turned towards the west and soon after Companies A, D, E and I were thrown out as skirmishers.<sup>19</sup> We ran in to one or two straggling Johnnies which we chased, but soon were recalled as a large force had been discovered on the right of the advance. Turning towards these, we soon drove them back (the skirmishers) to quite a strong position on the top of a ridge, but we soon flanked them, and combined with the direct attack in front, drove them back half a mile or so on to their reserve and artillery. We were skirmishing afoot, while Company L under command of Captain Parsons supported us mounted.<sup>20</sup> When we arrived close to the enemy's guns they opened a severe fire with cannister with considerable effect on the support, which retired. At that time a few of us occupied a point of woods quite close to the enemy's battery and I am quite sure that we "annoyed" them some as they favored us with several charges of cannister. We all retired with the reserve and when I arrived to the place where we had left our horses with Pat Gilligan he was gone.<sup>21</sup> We afterwards found him half a mile to the rear, and getting our horses, joined the company.

The whole brigade was brought up onto and to the left of the knoll, while the First Division of cavalry went to our left. Our artillery opened quite a hard fire and the Rebels replied. Their skirmish line came up quite close, but one was thrown out from our line and drove them back some distance. After a while General Kilpatrick began to want to do something more and ordered General Farnsworth to charge them mounted with two regiments. Part of the 1st Vermont under Major Wells and the 1st West Virginia moved out in column down through the woods, but General Farnsworth seeing that the enemy had much the advantage in position and numbers, decided not to sacrifice his men and countermarched. Major Wells remarked that he "had rather charge into Hell than in there."

After waiting a short time the order to charge was repeated and this time it was made.<sup>22</sup> Just as we were moving off, part of us were dismounted (3rd Battalion [Companies A, D, K, M]) and placed behind a stone wall to act as a reserve and be ready to check the enemy if our column was repulsed. We had learned before this from prisoners captured that we were fighting Hood's Division of infantry, which had fought so desperately the day before for Round Top, but had been foiled in their attempts by the Fifth Corps.

I notice that General Chamberlain in his lecture on "The Left at Gettysburg" makes no particular mention of any fighting on the 3rd of July, but it is very probable to me that if it had not been for us he might well have had his hands full. The title of his lecture should be "The Left on the 2nd Day of Gettysburg." The left on the 3rd was beyond him.

Major Wells commanded the charging column (made up of his 2nd Battalion, companies B, C, G, H), while Lieutenant Colonel Preston remained with the dismounted men. As the rear of the column passed us he ordered us forward and we jumped from behind the wall, but just then General Kilpatrick came along and ordered us back. The charging column rode down a rough wood road to where it passed across a slight hollow, beyond which were two stone walls lined with Rebel infantry and back of them some distance was their artillery.

Our men jumped these walls and then the reapers of death were busy. General Farnsworth's horse was shot before passing the last wall and David Freeman of Company C<sup>23</sup> dismounted by Major Wells' order and gave him his horse. Soon Farnsworth fell gallantly leading his men, pierced by many bullets.<sup>24</sup> Many other brave sons of Vermont fell here, but the column pierced through the double lines of the enemy, part of that "body of incomparable infantry that carried the Confederate Government on their Bayonets for four years"<sup>25</sup> and large number of them began to throw up their butts of their muskets in token of surrender. Then the Rebel artillery was making havoc in the ranks and looking back they saw a column of infantry "double quick" on their left so as to come in their rear and cut them off. I am of the opinion that if those who were dismounted had been allowed to follow up as they started to do, they would have given this flanking column business of their own to attend to, so that the Rebels would not have interfered with the charging column. But as it was, our men saw that the case was hopeless, and leaving most of the prisoners,

made their way as well as they could. Some of them made their way through to the "Old Brigade," which was posted to the rear of Round Top in support of the Fifth Corps and nearly facing us. Others never returned and amongst them was Loren M. Brigham of Company F who fell in the forward movement, shot through the head, gallantly facing the enemy.<sup>26</sup> His last words were "Come on boys!"

The enemy made no very serious attempt to follow up the repulse, except by pushing up a skirmish line. The 18th Pennsylvania Cavalry were marched down into the woods near the skirmish line and fired several volleys mounted and then withdrew. The dismounted men then moved down to check the Rebel skirmishers, which position we held till about sundown, when the brigade was withdrawn. While in the woods we exchanged an occasional shot, one of the enemy fired and the bullet passed very near several of us who were behind a clump of trees. One man clapped his hand to his thigh, jumping around and exclaiming that he was shot. We all gathered around to assist, but after continuing his performance a few minutes he quieted down and came to the conclusion that he had only been hit by a fragment of bark that the ball had knocked off the tree he was behind. The Regular Brigade, who had extended to near the Emmitsburg Road relieved us, and we retired to the Taneytown Road near the Old Brigade, where we spent the night with comfort except a hard shower of rain.

The following is an account of Farnsworth's charge taken from Volume Seven of the Rebellion Record: "It is known that the enemy would mass his forces on Friday (3rd) for the purpose of breaking our right. The sudden and unexpected attack of General Kilpatrick on his own right caused the enemy to fear a flank movement in that direction and changed the character of the battle from an attack to simply defensive.

Unexpectedly hearing heavy firing and receiving a brisk attack on the right flank and rear, the enemy sent forward a large force of infantry to cooperate with the cavalry then being pressed back. Having had their skirmishers driven from the woods, the enemy took a strong position behind two stone and rail fences, one a few rods in rear of the other, and similar fence on the flanks.

General Kilpatrick was anxious to carry this position because if successful the enemy's ammunition train could be reached. Every means had been used to start the enemy for a charge, but unsuccessfully. The 1st

Vermont, Colonel Preston, 1st Virginia, Major Copeland, and the 18th Pennsylvania, Colonel Brinton, were in position to charge. The 1st Vermont, 1st Virginia, and a squadron of the 18th Pennsylvania led by General Farnsworth dashed forward at the word until the stone wall was reached. A few men pulled the rail fence away from the top of the wall. General Farnsworth leaped his horse over and was followed by the 1st Vermont—the enemy breaking before them and taking position behind the second fence.

The few rods between the two fences where our men crossed was a fearfully dangerous place, the little fence receiving the concentrated fire of three lines, from front and both flanks. The witnesses of the movement stood in breathless silence—their blood running cold as the chargers gained the second fence. Man after man was seen to fall—General Farnsworth among the rest. 'He is killed!' gasped many a one looking at that fatal spot, but no, that tall form and slouched hat are his—he lives—and all breathe again. His horse has been killed: a soldier gives him his horse, the General again mounts and dashes on.

The enemy here make a more formidable stand—but are driven away and the whole force go dashing, reeling over the fence in a whirlpool of shot and shell, such as seldom witnessed by soldiers. The constant roar of Musketry and Artillery on the main field gave to the scene a peculiar grandeur. It was fearfully grand. The second fence crossed and new fires were opened on the brave band. To retreat at that period was certain death and the only chance of safety was to advance, and advance they did for between one and two miles to the rear of the Rebel Army, and in sight of the coveted 'train'—but at what cost. Dispersing, the men returned under a galling fire as best they could. A few did not get back to their command for hours—many never came. The list of missing gradually lessened and hope led us to look anxiously for the return of General Farnsworth and when with the mornings dawn no tidings from him were heard, then hope said he was wounded—a prisoner—he has been left seriously—perhaps dangerously wounded at some house by the road side. Vain hope! Messengers were sent in every direction to search for the missing spirit. It did not seem possible that he was dead, and yet so it was. He had fallen just after crossing the second fence, his bowels pierced by five bullets. There some of the Vermont boys left behind at the hospital found his body two days after the fight and saw it decently interred. The brave, noble and generous Farnsworth has gone to his last rest and the sod that covers his grave has



been wet by the tears of those who loved and honored him while living. His name will ever be held in remembrance by members of the 3rd Division. Of the three squadrons of the 1st Vermont Regiment in the advance in this charge there were 15 killed, 15 wounded and twenty or more missing. The Regiment lost 75 or more men during the fight."

The morning of July 4th was passed in counting losses, making reports and getting the news. Some of us visited the Old Brigade and learned that Lee had been repulsed in his grand attack on the left center. We came to the conclusion that although our fight on the 3rd had not resulted in gaining ground, yet we had caused a large force probably superior to our own to be held in our front and thus weakening the center and very likely taking so many from the charging column under Pickett and Wilcox and Pettigrew. What that column would have done had it been reinforced by Hood's Texans will be forever a matter of speculation, but knowing as we do how near they came to succeeding, we can only guess.<sup>27</sup>

About 10 o'clock A.M. the cavalry started on a movement to head off Lee, who was supposed to be retreating, and capture his trains. The weather was capricious, sunshine and rain alternating several times. In the afternoon we rode through Emmitsburg, making a junction with Buford, and taking the road to the right. Stuart passed over the same ground soon after, and some of our stragglers slept in the same barn with Rebel stragglers. Things were somewhat winded about these times and there were many captures and hair breadth escapes. It was somewhere in this region that Henry Ward Beecher's "Hero of Norwood" had his adventures and I have no doubt but there is material enough left to furnish twenty more novels.<sup>28</sup>

About dark the country began to grow wild and interesting and soon the column ahead began to trot. I remarked that it "was only Company M closing up," but it continued some time and then the adjutant came back and told us to look out for an attack in the rear. Halting for a short time, pickets were thrown out to the left. Soon after we moved on over rising ground and about ten P.M. we found ourselves on the top of Monterey Gap where the road passes over South Mountain. There was a large yellow hotel here that was General Kilpatrick's headquarters, before which a large fire was burning. We halted here while the head of the column was capturing a Rebel wagon train below. Occasional shots were heard but nothing very severe. It is understood that about one hundred wagons and

other vehicles were captured and mostly burned. The balance of the train, which consisted of about eight hundred wagons under the command of General Imboden, was ahead and escaped.<sup>29</sup> He has written an account of that movement for the "Galaxy" claiming that he lost no wagons, but the facts are different.

We received orders to proceed along the top of the South Mountain to Smithsburg, then cross over to Leitersburg, where we expected to strike the Rebel trains again. The night was pitch dark, the rain fell in torrents, and the road was rough: a mere wood road over and amongst the rocks. A great many horses lost their shoes, and soon becoming lame, the riders would have to dismount and lead, and of course fell behind. A few drank too much Maryland whiskey, which being taken on an empty stomach, soon rendered them first combatant and then non-combatant.

At day light when we could count noses, we found that about one half as many were present as we had three days before. We passed near Smithsburg high up on the mountain, and soon descending, came in sight of the road through Leitersburg on which the Rebel wagons were supposed to be moving. Concealing the regiment behind a ridge, part of them were dismounted, and forming a skirmish line, moved over the ridge, but when we struck the road no wagons were to be seen. The last had passed about an hour before. We found a great many stragglers, some wounded and some not, who were paroled. A squad was sent out towards Hagerstown, but they found nothing but a few stragglers, infantry and cavalry. In the course of the day we moved into Hagerstown, where we halted some time. The citizens seemed glad to see us and reported that a large wagon train was at Williamsport, guarded by Imboden. We marched to the left (or east) of the town about a mile and unsaddled and fed from a large wheat stack.

Towards night, after resting an hour, we saddled up and took the old turnpike to Smithsburg. After marching several miles, about 9 P.M. we met a messenger with a dispatch from General Kilpatrick, ordering us to join him at Boonsboro, to which place he was then moving, along the western base of the South Mountains. We turned to the right about midnight, struck his column, and reported to General Kilpatrick. He asked Lieutenant Colonel Preston why, when he found that the wagons had escaped that he did not follow on and attack them, to which Lieutenant Colonel Preston replied that he found his regiment very much reduced, not

over half the men there that he had when he started and that as near as he could learn, the train guard was larger than his force, so that he did not think it advisable to attack. This seemed satisfactory to General Kilpatrick and we fell into the column and marched to Boonsboro where we arrived about 2 o'clock A.M. and went into "bivouac" in a ploughed field.

In the morning we found that directly across the road was a nice clover field that would have afforded good beds for ourselves and feed for the horses. During the day we made a forward move and again captured Hagerstown. The whole division participated and we entered the town without much resistance. Most of Companies A, D and L were dismounted at the southern end of the town and marched in afoot to assist the mounted men (18th Pennsylvania Cavalry), who made a gallant charge and captured some of the enemy's cavalry, amongst them we met Colonel James Lucius Davis of the 10th Virginia Cavalry, who was being conducted to the rear by his captor. He was a gray headed man "but the fire was in his eye."

When we were nearly through the town we received a volley from the Rebel skirmishers which wounded Lieutenant Trussell's horse "Betty Root," now (1872) owned by Asa Livingston of St. Johnsbury, Vermont. We deployed down the cross streets as skirmishers, hiding behind the houses and firing around corners. I saw a squad of them, and resting beside a telegraph pole, fired by carbine. I didn't know as I hit them, but they dodged mightily sudden. At one time we came on quite a lot of them, three to one, and saved ourselves by running through the house. We found ourselves being gradually forced back, but we went very slow. In fact we had sat down right before Lee's Army and they had to remove us before he could proceed.

Companies E, F, and L under Captain Schofield and Lieutenant Newton were deployed to the right of this town, Company I acting as a reserve. Companies L and E made one charge in skirmish line and carried a house, from behind which the enemy had annoyed our line seriously. These four companies lost fifteen men.

There was a citizen who had a long shotgun and rendered valuable aid. Some of Company I who were off to the right in the field held their ground too long, so that when they did leave they had to run the gauntlet of quite a severe fire, but none of them were killed. When we found the

bullets coming down the side streets we would fall back another street and so continue for some time, but a large number (14 from Company D) held on too long and found themselves surrounded. They went into a house and were secreted by the inhabitants. We gave them up for lost, but on the 11th and 12th, when we reoccupied Hagerstown, ten of them were found all right. Some came out through the picket line to near Funkstown on the night of the 10th and others remained in the houses till we came into town. Four were captured of Company D, two of which, Silas Kingsley and Samuel Washburn died in prison.<sup>30</sup> Some of them while in the town put on citizen's clothing and came and talked with the Rebel Army, which was passing through. Antipas H. Curtis even saluted General Lee.<sup>31</sup>

When it became evident that we were unable to hold the place against the whole of Lee's Army, an ambulance was sent in to bring out a few wounded men and soon after we were driven to the extreme verge of the town and the head of the column was moving down on the Boonsboro Road when "Boom!" went a gun and "Whiz" came a shell from right before us, and these were soon followed by others. It seems that while they had been amusing us in town, a force had crossed over from Smithsburg to the Boonsboro Road and had cut us off. We were in pretty close quarters now for we had a force of the enemy on three sides, north, east and south, and the force in front began to press on harder. When they opened on the Boonsboro Road the wagons and ambulances that had started east were taken across the fields to the Williamsport Road as we had lost the junction of the two roads at the entrance to Hagerstown. Quite a severe fight ensued, during which Captain Woodward of Company M and son of Chaplain Woodward was killed.<sup>32</sup>

A force had been sent towards Williamsport and was now engaged in shelling the enemy there while Buford was at Falling Waters shelling across the river. Imboden pretends that he drove us all off by a great show of force made by arming all his wagoners and shifting them from one place to another, ignoring the fact that we had the whole Rebel Army to our back.

When we fell back we talked of leaving horses for the dismounted men, but concluded not to and as it turned out we did the best way. About dark, or soon after, we fell back about two miles towards Williamsport, turned to the left about a mile or two and there joined Buford. Chaplain Woodward applied to General Kilpatrick to send a flag of truce after the

body of his son which had been left on the battlefield, but the general told him that it was impossible, and that we should do well if we all got away as it was. We proceeded across the country for several miles and camped for the night. Early in the morning we took a by-road and before noon were at Boonsboro.

During the 7th of July it rained and we remained stationary. George Austin, John Woodard, and "Tip" Beard<sup>33</sup> went out scouting with Green, General Kilpatrick's chief scout. I am of the opinion that they did most of their scouting inside our lines, like most other scouts, and that the most they discovered was whiskey.

Early on the morning of the 8th Stuart came down the pike from Hagerstown to drive us across the mountains and obtain possession of the gap before our army came, as they were known to be moving on the other side. Our pickets were driven in, but Kilpatrick and Buford made preparations to resist to the last. We were all moved out in line and our regiment was issued carbine cartridges. As we were proceeding down a road to the right we met General Kilpatrick and he asked how many cartridges we had, to which Lieutenant Colonel Preston replied that he had received forty rounds to the man, to which General Kilpatrick says, "I said sixty rounds!" Lieutenant Colonel Preston thought forty rounds was as many as the men would carry and we thought so too. After proceeding down the road some distance we turned to the left and moved across the fields. The fight was raging quite hard on the pike and beyond, but just as we were about to engage them, part of the regiment was sent to tear down the fences toward the gap, so as to make a good line for retreat. Just as we had finished the job a word was brought us that the whole force was to fall back and we were not to come up. This was a mistake, but we acted on it and picketed a road to the right, along the foot of the mountain. Towards night we received orders to rejoin the regiment, which we looked for some time, and finally fell in with the First Division that was moving up in line of battle, pressing the enemy who were falling back slowly and using their artillery freely, so that we received a severe shelling.

Before the arrangements were completed for a charge the Rebels were gone back towards Hagerstown and we joined the regiment which had been hotly engaged nearly all day, making one or two desperate mounted charges. Just before night the head of the 11th Corps came over the gap and descended onto Boonsboro, but did not participate in the repulse. We

had held the gap and the enemy had gone back no wiser than he came about the position of our infantry.<sup>34</sup>

We camped in an orchard to the left of the pike where we remained two days very pleasantly situated and were joined by Colonel Sawyer on the 10th, who took command of the regiment. The brigade had been under the command of Colonel DeForrest of the 5th New York since Gettysburg, when Farnsworth died.<sup>35</sup> I had some talk of going into the applesauce business with Darwin Wright.<sup>36</sup> Apples were plenty in the orchard and I was to cook them and Wright was to furnish sugar which he had captured at Monterey. Unfortunately, just as we were already to begin business, and no doubt should have done considerable of it, General Meade interfered by having us sent forward towards Hagerstown. During these two days the army had all passed by and taken position in front of Lee, who was stationed with his left near Hagerstown and his right near the Potomac below Falling Waters, so as to cover the crossing at that place and Williamsport. On the 10th our right was moved up to near Funkstown where the pike crosses Antietam Creek, the Old Brigade having quite a serious fight.<sup>37</sup> We moved up near there and turning off to the right relieved the pickets there and held the front line all night. We remained in nearly that position the next day and night, when we were rejoined by some of the men who had been cut off in Hagerstown.

On the 12th we advanced and occupied Hagerstown without much opposition and took position in line of battle near the "Seminary," which we held for about thirty-six hours without unsaddling. The enemy were opposite to us on the Williamsport Road and were throwing up earth works using some buildings which they tore down to assist in construction. They were on higher ground than we were and had heavier artillery than our light horse batteries. By horse artillery I do not mean that such as we used to hear about at the first of the war, with the "Steam Gun," but that in which all the men, gunners and all, were mounted. The left of our line was at Fairplay and we were the extreme right, until during the day some Pennsylvania Militia under General W.F. Smith<sup>38</sup> arrived and were posted in Hagerstown.

"Tip" Beard received permission to go into town after food and the next we heard of him, he was in the hospital shot in the heel. He says that the officer in command of the infantry skirmishers wanted him to go on to the line and show his men how to fight and that while gallantly leading

them on he was wounded. The men of the company told him that he must have been running away and received the bullet in his heel from behind just as he was lifting it up.

On the 12th of July a council of war was called of the corps commanders of infantry and division commanders of cavalry, of which a majority voted not to attack, but it is needless to say General Kilpatrick was not of that number. After his return to the division in the afternoon of the 13th he decided to make a little reconnaissance and ordered our regiment to report to headquarters. We proceeded to the western part of the town and Companies D and I were deployed as skirmishers along with the infantry (part of the militia), but we soon went ahead of them, driving the enemy back through the wheat field on to a knoll, behind which was their battery which opened on us pretty sharp, but we worked up to it so close that they finally limbered to the rear. "Beauregard" was very prominent in this fight, firing about 100 rounds. While this was going on General Kilpatrick ordered "only a squadron"<sup>39</sup> to charge down the road to our right and capture some of the enemy if possible. Companies F and L under Captain Schofield and Lieutenant Newton charged down the road with great gallantry, although it was plain to be seen that the force was inadequate for the work required of them. They received a severe fire from the enemy's battery and from the infantry, but proceeded some distance until they were met by a severe fire from a force concealed in the woods, and were compelled to retire, bringing two prisoners with them. Captain Schofield was bayoneted and taken prisoner and was not released till just before the war closed in 1865. A few of the men went through the enemy's line, and coming around by the north, escaped. A few men were wounded during the fight and in going to the rear, of course passed near the colonel and others. It is understood that one of these lookers-on went to the rear after Dr. Edson because the "slaughter up there is terrific."<sup>40</sup> We then returned to camp near where we had been and remained there all night, but having a better place for camp grounds, in as much that we were in a clover field so that the horses could get a good "belly full."

I had bought some new pants that day in town and having a clean shirt went into a neighboring barn and luxuriated in a suit of clean clothes all through, and concluded to remain there all night in company with M. V. B. Vance.<sup>41</sup> According to Imboden, our little skirmish produced quite a scare in the Rebel Army as he says that he had left the Potomac for Winchester with prisoners and was recalled by an express from General Lee

saying that "the enemy were demonstrating heavily on his left and he wished to have the advantage of his accurate knowledge of the roads and topography of the country." The barn that we stayed in was full of our soldiers, but had several unpleasant reminders of its use in the shape of legs and arms.

Early in the morning of the 14th we joined the regiment which was just moving out on the Williamsport Road. We soon passed through the enemy's earth works on the ridge and continued along the pike, capturing quite a number of stragglers who had been left behind in their retreat. It seems that Lee had recovered part of the pontoon bridge destroyed by Colonel Dahlgren<sup>42</sup> and with the aid of some scows, wagons, et cetera, had constructed a bridge at Falling Waters. The river had fallen so that they could ford at Williamsport and at dark on the 13th the crossing had begun and continuing all night, by morning the whole Army of Northern Virginia were across except Pettigrew's Brigade, which was the rear guard at Falling Waters, and also several hundred stragglers, who being away from their commands had not heard the order to retreat and had slept on till morning. When we had arrived within about a mile of Williamsport we turned to the left and the whole brigade halted near our old camp ground for an hour or so. We then moved on very fast to near Falling Waters, but when we arrived there the fight was over, but the number of dead attested to the severity of it. It happened in this manner. The Michigan Brigade had passed on and coming out of the woods at the foot of a hill, saw some Rebel earthworks and some of the enemy behind them with guns stacked. The Rebels made no attempt to resist the advance of our men, who supposing that they wished to surrender, came up in a careless manner to receive it, but just before the Michigan men were over the works, the enemy suddenly seized their guns and poured a sudden volley into the unsuspecting ranks, killing and wounding a great many (amongst the wounded was Colonel Kidd of the 6th who was shot in the heel) and throwing the rest into confusion. A charge was finally made and most of the enemy captured, except General Pettigrew, who was carried away mortally wounded and died in Winchester soon after.<sup>43</sup> The Michigan men say that they were deceived by the Rebels who "made believe to surrender," which made our men careless and then took advantage of it, but the Rebel prisoners say that they supposed that the column approaching was their men and as soon as they found out different of course they opened fire, which is rather dubious to say the least. Our brigade should have been nearer to have rendered assistance and on the 25th of July Colonel DeForrest of the 5th



New York, who commanded the brigade at that time, was relieved in consequence of the above affair, and Colonel Sawyer took command.

General Kilpatrick telegraphed to General Meade and he to the Secretary of War that we "had driven the enemy across the river and captured his rear guard, Pettigrew's Brigade," which was published in the papers and which General Lee denied, and to which General Kilpatrick replied that he had captured 1,500 prisoners, which was more than the average of Lee's brigades.

Thus ended to so-called "Gettysburg Campaign" and thus was lost another opportunity to crush the Rebellion, and such an opportunity had never happened before and never would again, when everything seemed to be in our favor. The policy of the Rebellion was to wage a "defensive" war with "offensive" returns, when opportunity might occur. This had resulted well when rightly conducted in this and the Antietam Campaign had been carried too far and resulted in disaster. The Rebel Army had lost more than thirty thousand men, while we had lost twenty three thousand. We had received a reinforcement of eleven thousand men under General French and as many more militia under Baldy Smith and would be fighting on our own ground as much as the enemy would be. His left wing was "thrown into the air" and could be easily turned, and if the Rebels had been defeated they had the swollen Potomac behind. As President Lincoln said to General Meade soon after, "the fruit seemed so ripe, so ready for plucking that it was very hard to loose it."

On the 15th we returned to Boonsboro, and the next day proceeded to Harper's Ferry, crossing the Potomac on a pontoon bridge and sleeping in the old burnt armory buildings. On the morning of the 17th we crossed the Shenandoah, and riding down the river at the foot of Loudon Heights, took position to cover the pontoons at Berlin, where the infantry were crossing. The next day we camped near Purcellville and the forges were brought up and the horses shod. Beauregard "threw himself" here, shoeing eighteen horses in half a day. Colonel Sawyer put a safety guard on the garden near our camp to save the vegetables, but if I remember aright, some of us dined on onions and fried apples the next morning. About this time General Kilpatrick received leave of absence and General Custer took command of the division and moved us to between Upperville and Ashby's Gap on the 19th. The enemy occupied the Gap and the village of Paris and we bivouacked on the right of the road with pickets out near a cornfield and

the Rebel pickets nearby on the other side of the cornfield. After dark two of us went to a large house nearby after milk and as we were coming out of the gate on our return met Francis Rowell<sup>44</sup> going in on the same errand. He did not return that night, but the next morning came in without his arms and said that just as he reached the back side of the house two men came up to him suddenly and presenting revolvers, convinced him that his best course was to surrender, which he accordingly did. They took him off several miles afoot, relieved him of his arms, paroled him, and set him at liberty, and he had been walking ever since and we could judge the distance. Frank could not remember the names of the men, but one of them told him he "was a candidate for Ex (Lieutenant?) Governor of Virginia last year" which must have been General Imboden. The parole was not recognized on account of the absence of a commissioned officer on our side, which late orders required.

On the 20th we occupied the gap, our part of the regiment being sent up to the hill to the right where we were not engaged very much, as the enemy fell back on our approach, but where we could see the Michigan men move up to the works near the pike. We could see quite a force of "Johnnies" off to the left of the gap and expected they would make quite a fight, but when our men came in range they retired and left them in possession of the gap. The hill we had climbed and the region skirmished over was very steep and rough and I found that my horse had wrenched his shoulder and was quite lame. We camped near Upperville that night and the next day when the regiment was ordered to Snicker's Gap, quite a number of us who were dismounted or had lame horses, remained behind. The infantry at this time was pressing along the east base of the Blue Ridge and we (dismounted men) accordingly followed, camping that night of the 22nd near Salem, having met large bodies of infantry which were being concentrated on Manassas Gap and would have cut the Rebel Army in two the next day at Front Royal if it had not been for the feebleness and mismanagement (sometimes called drunkenness) of General French, who had command of the Third Corps in the advance.<sup>45</sup>

The next day we went to Warrenton where we found General Newton with the First Corps in possession.<sup>46</sup> The next day we went to Warrenton Junction where we found the wagon train of the entire army and the following day returned to Warrenton, where we turned over our horses and amongst them "Old Clem" whom I had ridden since April. He was a full blood Morgan horse with a very long mane and tail and was said to have

been nineteen years old when purchased by Colonel Platt in 1861. In the winter of '62 and '63 at Fort Scott he had the "Foot Rot" (so called) and lost one of his "hooves" (hoofs), but a new one grew out in place of it just as good, only a little pinched at first. I presume that he was sent into Washington and recruited up and I did not see him again, but when we were halted in the woods near City Point on July 2nd, 1864 on our return from the ill-fated Wilson raid, a cavalryman rode by on a horse said to be by those who saw him to be "Old Clem."

Major Wells collected together the dismounted men of the whole division and took them into Washington on the cars for remounting. Our equipments were left in Maryland Avenue and we dined and lodged at the Soldier's Retreat. Norris<sup>47</sup> and I started out for a stroll on Pennsylvania Avenue and seeing the patrol approaching on our side, crossed over and struck the other sidewalk just in front of the patrol on that side, who, of course, picked us up. We plead ignorance of orders, but to no avail, so long as we had no pass, and we spent the night in the Central Guard House in company with deserters, pickpockets and other celebrated characters, which we thought rather hard. The next morning we were released and our property restored, except \$3 that somebody stole out of my wallet, and returned to the "Retreat" where we were well laughed at for not being sharper. Cook of Company D<sup>48</sup> thought anyone must be green to fall in their hands. That night he was missing and the next morning as we marched up the avenue for horses, as we passed the guard house who should come out and join us but Cook. We remarked that anyone must be green to fall into the hands of the patrol, but he didn't make any remark in return.

We drew our horses from a corral at the upper end of the city and crossing the Aqueduct Bridge, camped about one mile from it. Priest of Company E and Austin of Company D,<sup>49</sup> getting ahold of too much tanglefoot had to be left behind, and in consequence were involuntary borders at a place in Georgetown for some time. The next night we camped just beyond Centerville and from there to the Rappahannock guarded a train of army and sutlers' wagons. Mosby had been operating near here a few days before and the sutlers were very careful to keep well closed up and occasionally forked over a few eatables by way of keeping us in good humor.

It was on this march to the Rappahannock that Major Wells broached the true theory of capturing Mosby and his gang. He said that if we should begin on the Potomac from its mouth to the Blue Ridge and proceed through the country to the James River and hang or imprison every man, woman and child and burn every house and barn, then you would have Mosby and his gang, and not otherwise.

We found the regiment on picket near Hartwood Church under command of Lieutenant Colonel Preston, Colonel Sawyer being in command of the brigade, as before mentioned. But to resume the movements of the regiment. General Meade, finding that in his efforts to strike Lee in the flank he was exposing his right, had the regiment sent back on the 21st of July to Snicker's Gap, which they held till the 23rd. Pat Gilligan<sup>50</sup> was on post at the ferry across the Shenandoah with orders not to fire unless fired at. Pat had a good situation behind a tree, and seeing a good chance, could not resist the temptation to fire at a Johnnie. They fired back and continued to do so all day so that Pat could not be relieved till night. He was satisfied that he got full "rations" that time. On the night of the 23rd they camped at Upperville, on the 24th near Amissville and on the 25th joined the brigade. By this time it was evident that the greater part of the Rebel Army was across the Blue Ridge and south of the Rappahannock, so our army was positioned along the north bank and the Third Cavalry Division was sent to the left flank near Hartwood Church, where we joined them.

## CHAPTER TEN

### Along the Rappahannock

Early in August I was sent out with seven men to patrol the road towards Falmouth. Arriving at the fork of the Bank's Ford Road I left one man on picket there and proceeded towards and in sight of Falmouth and then returned to the picket who reported seeing some men coming up a ravine towards the road in our rear and which he took to be deserters. We determined to try and find them, so dividing the squad, part were sent along a road to the right, and the balance took the road back towards Hartwood Church. While examining the road for tracks about ten Rebels suddenly jumped up in the pine bushes to our right, cocked their guns, ordered us to surrender, and one of them at the same time fired. There were four of us there and while one turned back, the other three, including myself and Cook of Company D, went forward as fast as our horses could carry us. I pulled out my revolver, and turning in my saddle, fired at a person who seemed to be pursuing me, at any rate he was coming after me as fast as possible. I did not hit him and the next instant saw that instead of its being a "Bushwacker," it was Cook. He did not know at the time that it was me that fired at him, but thought it was one of the "Johnnies" and said it was the nearest he ever had a bullet come to him. The men in camp were alarmed and a party was sent out (Company F under Lieutenant Clark<sup>1</sup>), but could find nothing. The Rebels had most likely crossed the river near Bank's Ford and concealing their horses in the woods, had crept up to the road in hopes of getting hold of a few horses. In this they did not succeed as no one was hurt, and very likely they immediately returned to their horses and made their escape across the river.

Bushwacking being so frequent here, an order was sent to Lieutenant Colonel Preston to arrest all the able bodied male citizens and send them to headquarters, which we did within a few days. Later an order was received to send a detail of men and two officers to headquarters of the Sixth Corps as orderlies and escorts. Captains Grover and Edwards<sup>2</sup> with men from Companies A, D, K, and M were detailed, and proceeding to General Sedgewick's<sup>3</sup> headquarters, were distributed through the corps at each brigade and division headquarters,<sup>4</sup> while the two officers and some men remained with General Sedgewick. These men remained there till the

spring with some changes, when they returned to the regiment in season to take part in the Wilderness Campaign.

A pioneer corps was formed and John Woodard was detailed from Company D. He had an idea that only deadbeats were detailed on this service and tried to have the adjutant let him off. Gates<sup>5</sup> comforted him by saying that very often he might have to go ahead of the column to tear down fences under fire and that he wanted just as good men for that position as any. John was compelled to submit, but I don't think he did much duty in that line.

On the 20th of August, the 2nd New York Cavalry, Kilpatrick's old regiment, was added to our division.<sup>6</sup> Colonel Davies<sup>7</sup> was outranked by Colonel Sawyer, and of course by General Custer, the two brigade commanders, and as Kilpatrick desired to have him command one of the brigades, a change must be made. Accordingly, our regiment was transferred to the 2nd Brigade and the 2nd New York Cavalry assigned to the 1st Brigade, which made Davies the ranking colonel there and of course in command. This was said to have been done "to equalize the Brigades," but it did not accomplish "that object." In consequence of this we were moved about a mile to a new camp in the woods near General Custer's headquarters. I annex Colonel Sawyer's report of the operations of the regiment for the next twenty days:

Headquarters First Vermont Cavalry  
Groveton, Va., October 24, 1863

Peter T. Washburn,  
Adj. and Ins. Gen. of Vermont.

Sir:—I have the honor to submit to you, the following report of the services rendered by the 1st Vermont Cavalry, from August 22d to September 10th, 1863.

On the 21st of August, an order was received transferring the First Vermont Cavalry, from the First to the Second Brigade of Kilpatrick's Division; said to have been done in order to equalize the Brigades. I had been in command of the First Brigade since July 25th, by virtue of seniority of rank in that Brigade. I at once

gladly resumed the command of my Regiment on the 22d, near Hartwood Church.

On the night of the 24th, I received orders to have my Regiment ready to march at three o'clock next morning. We accompanied our Brigade to King George County, and had a brisk skirmish with the enemy, and returned to camp the same night, having marched a distance of sixty-four miles. We remained in bivouac until the 28th, when we went on picket on the Rappahannock near Falmouth, and remained upon this duty till the first day of September.

At one o'clock, A.M., on that day, I moved my Regiment with the whole Division on the second King George County expedition, that has given Gen. Kilpatrick and his Division such notoriety, from the novelty of capturing the two gunboats. By reason of a mistake of a staff officer in making the assignment of the order of march, my Regiment was thrown in the rear of the column, until we arrived in the presence of the enemy near the scene of the skirmish on the 24th of August. Here, I was given the post of honor. My duty was to ascertain if there was any enemy in "those woods" in our front, and, if so, to drive them out if I could. I detached Company I as advanced guard, and closely supported them with the entire Regiment. We did not have to proceed very far in doubt. We soon encountered their pickets, who, after exchanging a few shots, retired under cover of the woods. The road from King George Court House to Port Conway, was a narrow road running through very dense woods for a distance of five miles; and through these woods, with less than fifty dismounted carbineers, we drove the rebel infantry skirmishers, and, passing the woods into the open fields, drove them the other side of the Rappahannock. Here, I found the two gunboats, and the rebels busy getting out the machinery. My Sharpshooters soon drove them from the boats, though they were anchored well under the South shore of the river. Next morning occurred that famous "bombardment" of the gunboats, of which the country has heard so much. There was, however, no further fighting.

The Regiment returned to its old camp near Hartwood on the 3rd of September, and immediately resumed the line of picket

duty on the Rappahannock, and continued in the discharge of this duty until the commencement of the campaign, South of the Rappahannock, on the 12th of September.

It having been made known to me by Brig. Gen. Custer, that I was to assume command of the Brigade on the next Monday, during his twenty days' leave, and every appearance indicating a long quiet, I accepted a three days' leave to visit Washington on important business, private and official. Saturday evening I heard a vague rumor of some movement of the Cavalry Corps on the Rappahannock. I took the first train for the front—fortunately found my horses at Warrenton Junction, and, following the trail, overtook my Brigade at Racoon Ford, on the Rapidan. Culpepper had been passed, but one had no need to spoil for a fight. The command of the Second Brigade now devolved upon me, and being required to send one Regiment to picket North of the Rappahannock, I was obliged to send my own. Its history for the next twenty days is more properly reported to you (as indeed I believe it has been in part) by the officers in immediate command.<sup>8</sup> I have this, however, to say: I have always exacted from it its full share of the burdens of this arduous campaign, and have ever found it prompt to respond to every call; and have always felt safe when it was on guard. Having had the fortune to command other good cavalry troops during the late exciting campaign South of the Rapidan, I am proud to say that our own well tried Regiment, at least, does not suffer by comparison with any.

I shall reserve an account of its participation in the campaign since the 9th inst., for a subsequent report, promising that it has added new laurels to its before well earned fame.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
E. B. SAWYER  
Col. 1st Vt. Cavalry .

It was while on one of these King George County expeditions that Lieutenant Mitchell<sup>9</sup> lost his big Virginia horse. The horse was missing in the morning and after hunting around for some time, an old unguarded



well was found in a clump of weeds and in this well was the horse. He had probably been feeding nearby and tumbled in accidentally, and was alive and uninjured, but as they had no derrick or windless along, they were obliged to put a carbine ball through his head and leave it. No doubt the citizens will always think the horse was put there on purpose to spoil the well. Aiken of Company I<sup>10</sup> fell into this well the night before and had to be drawn out by ropes, occasioning considerable sport.

It will be observed that the above report of Colonel Sawyer's covers a period during a time when he was absent from the regiment, during which we participated in a very brilliant affair generally called the fight at Culpeper. Lieutenant Colonel Preston was sick and Major Hall absent on a furlough, so that Major Wells was in command, and the following is his report of the same. It is needless to remark that the regiment was well commanded and made a good record.

Headquarters First Vermont Cavalry  
Grove Church, Va., September 20, 1863.

Peter T. Washburn,  
Adj. and Ins. Gen. of Vermont

Sir:—I beg leave to submit the following brief report of the part taken by this Regiment, (the first and second battalions,) in the recent operations by our cavalry against the enemy.

We left our camp, near Falmouth, Va., at one o'clock, P. M., on Saturday September 12, 1863, and proceeded with the Division to which we are attached to Kelly's Ford. Crossed the Rappahannock River early the next morning, Sunday, 13th inst., and arrived in the vicinity of Culpepper Court House at about twelve o'clock, M., where our cavalry were briskly engaged in skirmishing with the enemy's cavalry and artillery, driving them toward the town.

This Regiment was immediately directed by Gen. Kilpatrick, commanding Division, to move to the left of the town, and endeavor to cut off a portion of the enemy's force stationed in that direction; but a stream of water, running along the border of the

village, had become so much swollen by the rain of the day before, as to render it unfordable, and thus prevent these instructions from being carried out. We then received orders to charge into the town, which we did,—passing through—capturing eight prisoners and one gun with carriage, horses, &c., complete, and occupied a knoll on the South side of the village, where the Regiment was subjected to a very severe artillery fire from the enemy's guns, stationed at our front and left. We were here directed by General Custer, commanding the Brigade, to attack the force occupying the woods to the left of the town, and holding the road leading in the direction of Orange Court House. Companies E and I of the first battalion, were sent to the right, dismounted, and engaged the skirmishers of the enemy's left. The second battalion (companies B, C, H and G), under Captain Adams,<sup>11</sup> being sent forward charged the enemy, driving them from the road, and through the woods back under the protection of their artillery, capturing twenty-six prisoners. The fight at this place continued for a considerable length of time, three separate charges having been made by our men. The force in front of the second battalion, largely out-numbering their opponents and being strongly supported, rallied, and gained temporary advantage, during which time they succeeded in removing their artillery stationed in our front. A movement on our flanks was at one time attempted, but it failed its purpose, the enemy being compelled to retire. The repulse of the enemy along the whole line, being at this time, four o'clock P. M., complete, they retreated in the direction of the Rapidan River. The pursuit was continued until dark, but their forces did not make a stand before crossing.

The commanding officer being temporarily disabled during the engagement by the bursting of a shell, the command was turned over for a short time to Captain Adams.

The engagement lasted nearly four hours, during which time the Regiment was continually under fire. We captured about forty prisoners during the day, the enemy leaving several killed and wounded on the field.

All the officers and men did their whole duty, and are entitled to great praise for their bravery and good conduct.

Accompanying this, is a list of the casualties.

I have the honor to be,  
Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM WELLS  
Major Commanding 1st Vt. Cavalry

There were present during this engagement a few men from each of the four companies at Sixth Corps headquarters, about twenty men in all. Pony Mountain is situated about two miles south of Culpeper and at the base of this the enemy made quite a stubborn resistance while their signal corps was signaling from the top. Buford's division had the advance here for a short time and while so doing shelled a house in which the enemy's sharpshooters had taken position, unfortunately killing an old man and a boy who were in the cellar. While this was going on, General Kilpatrick came out onto the ridge south of Culpeper and inquired where Pony Mountain was. On its being pointed out to him he remarked that he "should sleep on Pony Mountain or in heaven," patterning after Albert Sidney Johnston's, remark, I presume, at Shiloh that he would water his horse that night in the Tennessee River or in Hell. We camped that night to the right of the mountain and near the foot of it. Adjutant Gates having been taken prisoner, Mason A. Stone of Company F<sup>12</sup> was appointed First Lieutenant of Company M and acting adjutant, for which he was well fitted, having had considerable experience, besides a natural turn for business. In the morning the whole command moved on and before noon had arrived at the Rapidan at Raccoon Ford, while the Rebels were in position on the other side prepared to dispute the crossing. We were sent up the river to Somerville Ford and the regiment was ordered to charge across the river. This was folly worse than useless, but the orders must be obeyed and preparations were made accordingly, although it was certain that many would never come back again. Major Wells gave his valuables to the possession of "Beauregard" and the column moved down to the bank of the river. They had to pass across a wide plain, down a steep high bank, and then across a narrow fringe of meadow before reaching the ford, and the enemy made but little opposition. Just before reaching the river, however, the order was countermanded and the regiment returned. As soon as this move was observed by the enemy, they opened with six

batteries from the hills, which were much higher on the south than on the north side, and soon demonstrated what would have been the reception that we should have received. In fact, the whole Rebel Army was posted along the river there and I have no hesitation saying that it would have been impossible for our whole army to have made a lodgement on the other bank. We took position behind some old log houses on the top of the bank where we remained all day with some skirmishing.

The Rebels were unable to depress their guns sufficiently to damage us much, but caused their shells to burst directly over us. I noticed that about the time one of these would burst, Sergeant (or private) Phillips,<sup>13</sup> our former color sergeant, seemed to be imitating a woodchuck and wanted to get into his hole. There was a cow feeding on the side hill and some of our men tried to milk her, but the Johnnies drove them away yelling "Stop milking that cow Yanks!" One of the pioneers, getting rather nervous, edged out of the ranks, mounted his horse, and made for the rear across the open plain as fast as his horse could carry him. The Rebels opened fire on him and set up a great yelling, but he got away without any damage from them, although I think he fared worse with Major Wells, who sent a guard after him with orders to bring him back dead or alive. That night we were relieved and moved back into the woods, not far from Mitchell's Station, where we remained a few days and were then sent back to near Grove Church as before mentioned.

We camped that night in an old camp of the Rebel cavalry about a mile north of Culpeper. We crossed the Rappahannock at the "Station," on a pontoon bridge and in due time arrived at our destination in a soaking rain which had continued without intermission for the past thirty-six hours. It was evident that the army would not cross the Rapidan soon and the net results of the late move were the driving out of the Rebels from the triangle between the Rapidan and the Rappahannock, the capture of three guns and several hundred prisoners, and of course a few Rebels killed and wounded.

Here Lieutenant Colonel Preston again took command of the regiment and soon Major Bennett arrived with quite a number of men. Bushwackers were quite plenty and very bold, capturing men very near camp. They seemed to be well posted in regard to our movements, for some men captured by them the day Major Bennett arrived were told all about it and the number of men he brought with him. The Rebels picketed the other side of

the Rappahannock and expressed great admiration for Lieutenant Newton's new boots.

While we were here the commissions recommended by Lieutenant Colonel Preston (before mentioned) arrived and Sergeant Moore of Company D, to his great surprise, found himself to be a lieutenant and Mitchell, to his great surprise, found himself to be a first sergeant. He had been serving on Colonel Sawyer's staff, and continued to do so for some time, and was then detached to Vermont to assist in recruiting, so that he did not get back to the company till a short time before he was commissioned as second lieutenant of Company I. The whole arrangement was the fault of Colonel Sawyer and by it some one was kept out of an officer's pay from June 1863 to February 1864, for when the commission arrived there were not men enough in Company D to muster a second lieutenant.

On the 28th of September we were relieved by a New York regiment and rejoined the brigade then in camp near Wayland's Mill. While in this camp the Michigan men took possession of a mill and furnished considerable flour for the command. Soon after, General Pleasonton reviewed the division.

One day Captain Cummings and myself were ordered to report to division headquarters, and upon so doing, we found that General Kilpatrick wished to find a person (or persons) who had been to Gordonsville from Liberty Bridge, and had been in the neighborhood of Stannardsville. We answered the description and were ordered to report to corps headquarters and from there to General Meade's headquarters. We reported to General Humphreys<sup>14</sup> and were directed to Captain Paine or Major Duane of the Topographical Engineers. Major Duane was out, but Captain Paine showed us a map of the road to Gordonsville partially completed, which they wished to finish and the cavalry had been one day for that purpose, but the Rebel cavalry interfered and stopped it. We gave what information we could on the subject, especially mentioning a range of hills about two miles northwest of Gordonsville that we thought would afford a good defensive position and it is worthy of note that fifteen months later, when General Torbert<sup>15</sup> with the First and Second Cavalry Divisions attempted to occupy Gordonsville (in December 1864), he was met and stopped at this very same ridge. We judged from this inquiry that the army was preparing to move by the right flank, whereas the Rebels were preparing to

move in the direction on our flank and did do so in a very short time. We stayed that night near Fifth Corps headquarters with a "Libby" friend of Cummings and returned to the regiment the next day.

We found Henry Gervais<sup>16</sup> of Company F under guard at corps headquarters, he having gone home while a paroled prisoner without leave and had been picked up by the Provost Marshal. Gervais was a good soldier and this treatment was very unjust. We informed his officers of the facts and I presume they obtained his release.

Major Wells was detailed on a court martial for the trial of Lieutenant Colonel Johnstone of the 5th New York for drunkenness, the result of which was that Johnstone was dismissed from the service.<sup>17</sup>

Below I annex Colonel Sawyer's report of the operations of the regiment till the 19th of October 1863:

Headquarters First Vermont Cavalry  
Groveton, Va., October 24, 1863

Peter T. Washburn,  
Adjutant and Inspector General,  
State of Vermont.

Sir:—In compliance with your request that a report be made to you, of the part taken by this Regiment in the campaigns in which it participated, I have the honor to submit the following report of its transactions on the 10th and 11th insts.

On the 10th inst., I received orders to report with my Regiment at Gen. Kilpatrick's Headquarters, near James City. The Regiment had returned from picket duty on the Rappahannock on the 28th of September, and had been since that date resting in camp, near Wayland's Mills.

Upon my arrival at Gen. Kilpatrick's Headquarters, I found the enemy in possession of James City, Thoroughfare Mountain, and the race course. I was ordered to support Lieut. Pennington's battery (M, Second U. S. Artillery,) with my own, and the Sixth

Michigan Cavalry Regiment. The battery took position on an eminence on the Culpepper road, about a mile from James City. Deploying a squadron of the First Vermont Carbineers as skirmishers, I formed the two Regiments in a ravine in rear of the battery, under cover. The battery engaging the enemy's battery, and occasionally throwing a few shells into the woods at points where the enemy's sharpshooters became troublesome, continued to fire rapidly until the rebels withdrew their guns, and until it was quite dark.

About nine o'clock, P. M., I received orders to hold this position until further orders. Throwing a strong picket to the front, I allowed the men to sleep upon their arms which, for our arm of the service, means to lay upon the ground, holding their bridle, and keeping in readiness to leap into the saddle at a moment's notice. No demonstrations were made during the night.

At four o'clock next morning, I was ordered to report with Regiment to Gen. Davis, commanding First Brigade.<sup>18</sup> I found him on the same road, about two miles towards Culpepper. At day-light our retreat commenced. There was no appearance of the enemy in our rear until we had reached Culpepper.

Near Culpepper, I was ordered to rejoin my Brigade at that place. One section of Lieut. Pennington's battery, under Lieut. Eagan, accompanied me. I took up position on the hill immediately South of Culpepper, on the Orange Court House road, and in about an hour was joined by Gen. Custer, with the other Regiments of the Brigade, and the other sections of the battery.

Here Gen. Custer received orders to move his Brigade immediately through the town and across the run, which was done, my Regiment and the First Michigan bringing up the rear, the Brigade Band playing the saucy air of Yankee Doodle to the inhabitants, in whose countenances we could plainly read the expression, "good riddance."

Here, for the first time during the day, the rebels appeared, and in strong force, well on our left flank. I immediately formed my Regiment in line of battle on the crest of the hill on the right of

the road, where we remained for about half an hour, the batteries of both parties maintaining a furious fire over our heads.

I was again ordered to report to Gen. Davis, which I did; again forming in line of battle a little to the rear of the first position, and facing to the left, then to the right, and soon to the front or rear, rapidly changing positions, deploying skirmishers and looking pretty generally sharp for the enemy, for he now appeared ubiquitous.

I was now ordered to call in my skirmishers, and informed that the whole command was to commence falling back "as fast as possible." From this point to near Brandy Station, orders came to me in such rapid succession, that, if I executed all of them, I cannot recollect them. On the left of the railroad were broad open fields without fences, and a fine country for cavalry formations. I was ordered to march upon the right of the road, and the orders I received seemed to imply that the General supposed I had a similar fine field to operate upon. But quite the reverse was true. I would receive an order to march in column of battalions, for instance, or squadrons, when I could hardly march by fours, heavy oak woods coming nearly to the road on our right the greater part of the way. Such was the nature of the road and country for several miles.

But the great desideratum now seemed to be, to get back, and this we accomplished in the best order we could, considering the nature of the difficulties; and emerging into the open fields at length, for a mile or so had sufficient room to march in column of battalions, which we did, moving with the whole command at a rapid rate.

The scene now began to grow interesting. It was seen that we were not only flanked on both right and left, and closely pressed in the rear, but that right across the road we desired to travel, we were confronted by a strong force; that we were surrounded.

We now supported the right of Captain Elder's battery, who directed his attention to the columns of rebel cavalry, infantry and artillery, on the east of the road.



I was then ordered to recross the railroad—having crossed a little previously to the left—and again cover the right of General Davies' brigade. The road is here built upon an embankment, raised, I should judge, ten feet above the surrounding ground, so that while we were on the left of the road we had very good cover from the enemy's batteries. But we had to cross this embankment and reform under a terrible fire, at point blank range. We reformed in column of squadrons, and moving up on parallel lines with the cavalry on our left, came to a run, with steep banks, compelling us to break by fours to cross it, and re-form again on the other side in column of squadrons. Here, a good many stragglers from other regiments rushed wildly by us. Several horses being wounded became unmanageable, and communicating their excitement to others, considerable disorder was likely to ensue. I halted the command and addressed a few words to the officers and men. The Majors deliberately dressed their battalions, and the regiment moved on, passed the station, and came into line of battle in splendid order, eliciting the warm compliments of General Kilpatrick, who personally witnessed the manoeuvre.

We were now ordered to support a section of Captain Elder's battery, and formed on its left.

The scene had become wild and exciting. We had formed in junction with Buford. The batteries of the two divisions, and more than an equal number on the rebel side—in all, probably forty—were vigorously playing. Charges and counter charges were frequent in every direction, and as far as the eye could see over the vast rolling field, were encounters by regiments, by battalions, by squads, and between individuals, in hand-to-hand conflict.

We were not allowed to remain long as idle lookers on. General Custer with the other regiments of the second brigade had made a magnificent charge, but finding the rebel line formed beyond a ditch too wide for his horses to leap, he had, after the exchange of a few rounds, been obliged to retire in considerable disorder. The rebels seeing this disorder, were coming with strong force from the woods on our left, aiming for Captain Elder's guns, which we were supporting. The regiment obeyed the order to charge with more than their usual alacrity. The enemy was held in

check until the guns took up another position. The contest was sharp and severe. My loss in killed, wounded and missing being four officers and twenty-nine men.

To charge into woods with the sabre, against cavalry, supported by infantry, or dismounted cavalry, requires high courage, and is against immense odds. But not one faltered, officer, nor man.

After this charge, the regiment re-formed under a heavy fire from the enemy's artillery, and took its full share in the subsequent scenes of the day.

I have to say, generally, that officers and men conducted themselves most creditably. Lieutenant Colonel Preston rendered me valuable assistance in commanding skirmishers, and the rear guard; and Majors Hall, Wells and Bennett, by their example of coolness and bravery, inspired the men with confidence and bravery. Captain C. A. Adams, who is reported with the missing, and who is always enthusiastic and brave, seemed inspired on this day with an unusual enthusiasm.<sup>19</sup>

I take the following extract from the official report of General Kilpatrick to General Pleasonton: "In this retreat the Fifth New York, Major Hammond; the Second New York, Colonel Harhaus, and the First Vermont, Colonel Sawyer, were greatly distinguished." We also received the warm thanks of Generals Custer and Davis, and honorable mention in their official reports.

In this engagement nearly the whole cavalry force of the armies of the Potomac and Virginia confronted each other, and, having a splendid field, undoubtedly exhibited the most magnificent display ever witnessed upon this continent; and had it not been for the well known fact that the rebels were heavily supported by infantry, or had the rebels displayed more ardor for the offensive, after our junction with General Buford, must have resulted in one of the most bloody cavalry fights in history.

I have reported but one killed in the list of casualties of the Regiment—Sergt. Jason A. Stone, of Co. F<sup>20</sup>,—an honest, intelli-

gent, and unassuming man, and a brave and faithful soldier; one who performed his whole duty at all times, and under all circumstances and whose bearing was always such as to command the respect and esteem of all. In his death his friends have met with a truly sad bereavement, and all the Regiment loses one of its members, who ever reflected honor upon it.

We crossed the Rappahannock, and bivouacked about two miles from the river, unsaddled, and the men had just got comfortably rolled in their blankets when I received orders to picket the river from Ellis' Ford to United States' Ford, on the Rappahannock, with the First Vermont and Fifth Michigan Regiments, and to proceed as far as Hartwood Church, if possible, which was accomplished before eight o'clock the next morning; some parts of the command marching over thirty-three miles, after the fatigues and marches of this and the following day.

As this report is now too long, I will reserve for a future report some subsequent engagements, &c.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
E. B. SAWYER  
Col. Commanding 1st Vt. Cavalry

The day before the fight at James City (October 9th, 1863) it was reported in camp that our Signal Corps had discovered a way to read the Rebel signals and had seen the enemy signal from Thoroughfare Mountain that "Lee with the main body of the army was to make a flank movement by way of Madison Court House to our right while Fitzhugh Lee was to hold the front with his cavalry and a division of infantry." We called it at the time "a camp rumor," but before three days it all came to pass just according to the program laid out, and the force that was at Brandy Station and to the right of it was Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry. I shall never forget how they looked with their sabres glistening in the sun and yelling like ten thousand Devils. Buford had crossed the Rapidan that morning, but had fallen back too fast for us, so that we were surrounded, but the Rebels knew that he was close by, if we didn't. They did not press our rear very hard, but kept trying to get ahead of us, so as to delay us and let their

infantry come up and finish us, which part of the program we did not see fit to carry out. Some of our regiment who were skirmishing to the rear were cut off and escaped to our line by going off to the right between the Rebel columns, and crossing the river at Kelly's or United States Ford.

The evening of the 10th at James City we lay on the skirmish line and I was holding Captain Cummings' and my own horses, who were unbridled and eating, when we heard a column approaching on our right, which from the direction might be friends or enemies. Captain Cummings halted them and they proved to be some Michigan cavalry sent to relieve us, but for the moment I am willing to acknowledge that I was scared, as they were very near us before we heard them (seeing was out of the question), and our horses were unbridled.

In the evening of the 11th, when we arrived at the Rappahannock, we had to wait some time, and several of us (Cummings, Mitchell, Haynes of Company A, and myself)<sup>21</sup> crossed over ahead of the column, and after getting something to eat at a sutlers, we got separated and I remained with the Sixth Corps several days. Lee camped that night at Culpeper, but the next day took a tack west and north while Meade sent the Second, Fifth, and Sixth Corps and Buford's cavalry to Brandy Station, and I went with them. During this move I passed over the scene of our fight and looked for the body of Jason A. Stone mentioned by Colonel Sawyer as being killed, but was unable to find it. I also saw our pioneers of Buford's cavalry who had just buried our dead (11) and they had seen no one answering to the description. The dead could not be recognized by their clothing as the Rebels had stripped them all, but it afterwards turned out that he had been severely wounded and removed to Richmond and soon after died on a flag of truce boat or in Richmond.

At midnight we started on our return and after daylight on the morning of the 13th, I saw the bridge at Rappahannock Station blown up. I was riding a horse that one of my company who was at Sixth Corps headquarters had "swapped for," but as we were passing Warrenton Junction on the 14th, the former owner recognized his horse and was so urgent to "swap back" that I was forced to comply. I went with the Third Division Sixth Corps near Chantilly till the 17th, when I found that our brigade was at Sudley Springs near the old Bull Run battlefield and joined them there. The movement of the regiment during the time I was absent from it, as

well as that for the next two days, are well set forth in Colonel Sawyer's report, which is below:

Headquarters 1st Vt. Cavalry,  
October, 1863

Gen. Péter T. Washburn,  
Adj. and Ins. General, &c.

Sir:—I have the honor to transmit the following additional report of the part enacted by this Regiment in the recent campaign.

During the engagement at Brandy Station, on the 11th inst., Major Hall, not yet fully recovered from recent illness, was compelled to turn over his command to Major Bennett, who, in the absence of his own battalion, had been lately acting as my aid, rendering me valuable assistance on various occasions. I heard nothing from Major Hall, after he left the field, until about noon on the 12th, when I learned that he had crossed the Rappahannock the night before, in advance of the column, and, ascertaining that the Regiment had gone to Hartwood Church, had started with a small detachment to rejoin it. Near Morrisville, being erroneously informed by an infantry soldier—perhaps a spy or guerrilla in disguise—that I had camped a mile further on, he left Lieut. Grant to bring up the column, and rode forward, with a single orderly, to report to me. Neither himself nor orderly arrived, and it is feared he was captured by the guerrillas who had lately lurked about that neighborhood.

About 3 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, I received orders to have my command—1st Vermont and 5th Michigan Regiments—at Morrisville by daylight, and moved out as soon as I could assemble the various detachments, joining the division at Bealton Station at about 11 o'clock, A. M. From this point we marched by a circuitous route, through woods and fields, towards Warrenton, covering the left flank of the 2d Army Corps, and at about 10 P. M. bivouaced [sic] about three miles from Buckland's Mills. Early next morning we were aroused by the noise of artillery and musketry, and the whole division marched back in the direction of the firing, but finding our assistance not required in

repelling the attack, resumed the march via Buckland's Mills to Gainesville—my Regiment having the post of honor until we passed the 1st Brigade at the former place. At Gainesville the division was in order of battle for several hours, awaiting and expecting an attack, but not receiving it. Afterwards we moved to Sudley's Church, upon the Bull Run battle ground, where we were reinforced by Gen. Merritt's brigade of regular troops, and covered the flank of our army during this day and the next. The division remained on and about this field until the 18th inst., doing guard duty and having occasional skirmishes with the enemy, who was now in force at Gainesville, and had thrown forward his grand guards as far as Groveton, near the southern border of the field.

At about 4 o'clock, P. M., of Sunday 18th, I was ordered to advance as rapidly as possible towards Gainesville by the New Market road, which diverges from the direct turnpike towards the left, and, converging, unites with it again near Gainesville. I immediately threw forward one company (I) as skirmishers, who very soon encountered the enemy. The whole of the first battalion soon became engaged, Major Bennett and Lieut. Col. Preston pressing the enemy vigorously, and Major Wells keeping his reserve battalion well up to the skirmish line. In a few moments the rebels broke and fled precipitately, we pursuing them so hotly that Gen. Custer said he lost us. At the junction of the roads we were joined by the 2d New York, which had advanced by the turnpike and drove the enemy upon his reserve at Gainesville. It was now dark, and, as he presented a very formidable line of fire, we were ordered to attempt no further advance, but to hold the woods until further orders. This kept the Regiment on duty through the entire night,—a cold and rainy one,—and, next morning, in the hope of relieving the men, I sent word to Gen. Custer that I would drive the enemy from Gainesville in ten minutes if permitted. His reply was, "drive him out as soon as you please." Major Bennett immediately deployed his battalion, Major Wells supporting. The enemy threw forward a strong skirmish line as if he had at least a brigade in reserve, but, suspecting a ruse, I pushed forward the battalions rapidly. Company L, having no officer with them, seemed at first to hesitate, but upon my sending them Lieut. Clark of Co. F, they rallied and advanced gallantly. With this trifling

exception, the galling fire to which we were exposed did not for a moment check us, but the men went in with hearty cheers and nobly redeemed my promise. The enemy, who had thrown his whole strength into his skirmish line, fled too rapidly to be overtaken. I lost no men and but few horses. I extract the following from Gen. Custer's official report of this affair: "The First Vermont Cavalry, under Col. Sawyer, deserves great credit for the rapidity with which they forced the enemy to retire."

But our success did not bring us the rest I had hoped—not even time to make coffee. The road now being clear, an immediate advance of the division was ordered, with the purpose of occupying Warrenton. Near Buckland's Mills, however, it was found that the enemy occupied a strong position before us, and was prepared with artillery to dispute our further progress. I was now ordered to support Pennington's battery. When it was evident we would be attacked upon our left flank, Capt. Pennington advanced in that direction and opened a brisk, and, as we then thought and the event proved, a destructive fire. I formed my regiment in column of squadrons upon his left, pushing it well forward, and deploying two companies of dismounted carbineers, who skirmished with the enemy until some time after the guns were withdrawn. We were exposed here to very heavy fire from the large force which was brought against the guns, but, from its too great elevation, escaped with slight loss. Seeing the battery safely withdrawn, and that I was opposed by both infantry and cavalry, in superior force, and rapidly advancing in front and upon both flanks, I ordered the regiment to be withdrawn across Broad Run, which was done in excellent order. Towards night I was ordered to watch the enemy upon our right, and immediately engaged him with skirmishers until the brigade had reached the turnpike and was in full retreat. While we were coming off the enemy pursued us with great vigor, charging our rear and shelling the column.

My loss during the whole series of engagements and skirmishes since the 10th inst. has been providentially small. My Field and Staff Officers have uniformly shown their usual coolness and gallantry. I would particularly mention Majors Wells and Bennett for good behavior upon the 18th—the latter in remaining in rear under heavy fire until all the skirmishers were

safely across the bridge—the former displaying great energy and coolness in keeping perfect order in the column during the retreat. Captains Ray and Hazelton, Lieut. Williamson, commanding skirmishers, and Lieut. and Acting Adjutant M. A. Stone, are also entitled to my warm thanks. I ought to say that in mentioning these I mean no disparagement to others. All behaved well, and, indeed, have always been prompt to obey my every order upon the field.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
E. B. SAWYER  
Col. Com'g 1st Vt. Cavalry

The above report, it will be noticed, gives an account of the movements of the regiment during the campaign when Lee tried to "swap queens," that is capture Washington and let us have Richmond if we wanted it, but Meade was too quick for him, and the only object accomplished by the enemy was the destruction of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad.

The fight at Buckland's Mill on the 19th was the result of a trap set by Stuart. Wade Hampton held us in check on the pike as long as possible, when the Confederate Army fell back, and then retreated along the pike towards Warrenton with the expectation that we would follow up and then Fitz Lee was to come in from Auburn, to take us in the rear. When Stuart with Hampton's Division heard Fitz Lee's guns he turned around on the 1st Brigade and drove it in some confusion. Stuart's report says, "I pursued them from three miles of Warrenton to Buckland, the horses at full speed the whole distance, the enemy retreating in great confusion." Our fight was with Fitz Lee when he came in on our flank from Auburn, and the whole division would have fared worse if we had gone forward with the other brigade, instead of remaining at Buckland as we did. Our brigade had orders to follow the 1st brigade and was just ready to move when attacked.

While we were falling back, but before we crossed the Run I was hit by a carbine ball under my right arm. I kept my horse and rode to the ambulances in the rear, and getting into them was carried back beyond Gainesville where we remained all night, and in the morning discovered there was a bullet in me, but I had supposed that it was a bruise by a piece



of shell. In the A. M. we moved up to Gainesville and the ball was extracted by a New York surgeon in a dooryard at Gainesville, and towards night we were put on to a freight train and sent to Washington. After remaining in the Lincoln Hospital about four weeks my wound healed over and a lot of us were transferred to Brattleboro. While there it broke out again, a small piece of rib came out and gangrene came in, but it was not of long duration.

The 21st of January 1864 I reenlisted and received thirty days furlough. On the 25th of February I returned to Brattleboro and on March 1st started for the "front" along with Company E, which had been at home on reenlistment furlough.<sup>22</sup> We arrived at the camp of the regiment near Stevensburg on March 5th and found most of the regiment gone on "Kilpatrick's Raid."

On the 19th of October the regiment camped near Gainesville and on the 20th they moved to Groveton and remained till the 24th, when they returned again to Gainesville.

The regiment left Gainesville on October 31st and marched seven miles to the vicinity of Bristow Station. On the first of November they moved about one mile, on the 2nd marched seven miles to Catlett's Station, and on the 3rd rode thirty-one miles to Falmouth, being engaged in a skirmish with the enemy, and then fell back eight miles to the vicinity of Hartwood Church. On the 5th they returned to Catlett's Station and on the 7th marched to Grove Church, fifteen miles, thence to Ellis Ford on the Rappahannock, where they served on picket during the night. On November 8th the regiment marched ten miles to Stevensburg and on the 12th they moved to Raccoon Ford, eight miles, and picketed the Rapidan for seven miles along, until the 15th, when they returned to Stevensburg.

On November 18th the regiment marched fifteen miles to Ely's Ford on the Rapidan and then returned to Stevensburg. On November 21st they proceeded to Raccoon Ford where they remained on picket till the 24th, when they returned to Stevensburg. On the 26th the regiment moved to Morton's Ford where they remained on picket until December 3rd, having a skirmish with the enemy on November 28th in which they lost one man captured and one wounded.

From December 3rd to the 6th the regiment was on picket, moving from Morton's Ford to Mitchell's Ford. The regiment returned to Stevensburg on the 6th, where they remained until the 28th of February 1864, picketing the line of the Rapidan.

Many deserters came in during the winter to our regiment. Boris (a recruit) was attacked on picket (so he says) by the enemy who shot his horse, and he fired back, but as only two shots were fired and two shots were gone from his revolver, the general conclusion was that he did it himself. There was some trading—newspapers and such—across the river, but occasionally the rebels were ugly and sent bullets instead of papers. One man of Company I shot off his thumb.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Kilpatrick's Raid to Richmond

On the 28th of February the regiment started with other forces upon the famous raid to Richmond. Leaving camp at sundown, they crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, twelve miles from Stevensburg, marched all night, passed Spotsylvania Court House at 8 A. M. on the 29th, crossed the North Anna and arrived at Beaver Dam Station, twenty-five miles south of Spotsylvania, at 5 P. M. Here they assisted in destroying the depot and railroad. They left at dark, crossed the Little Branch River at 7:30 P. M. and halted two hours, and then marched in the night in a hard rain. They crossed the South Anna River at 6 A. M. on March 1st, crossed the south branch of the Chickahominy at 2:30 P. M. and halted three miles from Richmond. They remained there two hours to refresh the men and horses, during which the artillery maintained a continuous fire upon the Rebel fortifications. From thence they moved to Mechanicsville, six miles from Richmond, in a snow storm, having destroyed a mile of trestle work railroad on the way.

At 10 P. M. the camp of the brigade to which the regiment belonged was attacked, but the firing was soon silenced. An attack was again begun at 11 P. M. with artillery and musketry. A brisk skirmish ensued, in which the regiment sustained a prominent part, but being ordered to fall back, the division moved off, halting at 2 A. M. on March 2nd.<sup>1</sup> At 8 A. M. the division moved off in the direction of White House, but the regiment formed the rear guard and was soon attacked. They quickly dispersed the enemy, and after waiting an hour for a renewal of the attack, moved on, and at sundown arrived at Tunstall's Station. Here Captain Ray and Lieutenant Williamson, who had been detached on leaving Stevensburg with one hundred men to report to Colonel Dahlgren, rejoined the regiment.<sup>2</sup>

The pickets were attacked at 4 A. M., but the regiment moving out to their support, the enemy dispersed, but made another dash at 6 A. M. and were again repulsed without loss to the regiment. The command—the First Vermont Cavalry having the rear—moved at 8 A. M. and bivouacked that night within twelve miles of Williamsburg, and on March 4th they reached Yorktown. On March 6th a detachment of two hundred men from the regiment, with similar detachments from the other regiments of the division, were taken by transports to Portsmouth, Virginia, and from

thence, on the 7th, to Gloucester Point. On the 9th they marched to near West Point and a portion of the detachment proceeded to King and Queen Court House, skirmishing with the enemy, killing two and capturing fifteen of them. On the 11th they returned to Gloucester Court House.<sup>3</sup>

That portion of the command, which was left at Yorktown on the 5th, had taken transports for Alexandria on the 11th. The residue of the regiment sailed for Alexandria on the 12th, arriving there on the 13th. On the 16th the command started for Fairfax Court House, on the 17th marched to Warrenton Junction, and on the 18th arrived in camp at Stevensburg.

It will be seen that this was a most arduous expedition for both men and horses. Almost constantly on the march, frequently engaged with the enemy, bivouacking without shelter from the storms which prevailed, the regiment, and especially the recruits, who had but recently joined it, and were unaccustomed to such marches on horseback, suffered severely. Their cool daring is shown by their quietly stopping two hours "to refresh men and horses," within three miles of the rebel capital, and under the guns of its fortifications.<sup>4</sup>

E. P. Sloan<sup>5</sup> (now of Montpelier) of Company K was with Dahlgren and helped hang the (so-called) Negro guide that led them astray. He says that the guide was a white man disguised, blackened up, and the like. Soon after they left Kilpatrick they passed through or near the Rebel picket line by leading their horses. Lieutenant Williamson put a nose bag over his horses' nose to prevent his whinneying. Afterwards he noticed that the guide was nervous and he suspected him. When Dahlgren found that he was astray he questioned the guide and saw that he was not acting in good faith, and immediately ordered him hung. Shea of Company K<sup>6</sup> tied the rope to the limb, under the supervision of a staff officer, while Sloan tied his hands behind him with the handle or leather string of a carbine swab. The man begged some, but soon saw that it was of no use. Sloan opened his shirt and saw that he was white. The horse was led from under him, which left him dangling, and the column was not stopped at all, but when the rear came by, he was dead. That night Dahlgren charged breastworks (see the following Rebel account in which Hurley's Battalion and the 29th Virginia were engaged). Over eleven of Company K were killed and wounded in a few minutes; eight out of twenty-eight finally returned to camp.<sup>7</sup>

## Rebel Account

From *The Rebellion Record*, Volume 8, page 584:

Our last notice of the movements of the enemy closed with their appearance at Frederick Hall, on the Central Rail Road and the approach of another column towards Charlottesville. The latter, we learn, were met by our Cavalry under Col. Caskie<sup>8</sup> and repulsed. At Frederickshall they tore up the track for a considerable distance, and it is trustworthily reported, captured and brought off several of our Officers and Eight pieces of Artillery stationed there, besides doing considerable damage by destroying carriages, and otherwise rendering it unserviceable for immediate use.

Leaving Frederickshall on Monday, they crossed the Central R.R. and divided into two detachments, one moving in the direction of the James River Canal, and the other of Ashland, where it spent Monday night.

The force penetrated yesterday (Tuesday A. M.) to the Farm of John A. Seddon, Secretary of War, in Goochland County, burned his Barn & Stable, and it is reported by escaped men that his dwelling house was in flame. They burned all the Flour & Saw Mills in the vicinity, including the Dover Flour Mill and Barns, and the mills of Stanard & Morson, destroyed a number of freight and other boats in the Canal and did considerable damage to the Iron Works at Mannakio. The only damage done to the Canal, besides the destruction of boats, was cutting the lock at Simpson. Gen. H. T. Wise was at the time, on a visit, to his Son-in-law whose farm adjoins that of Secretary Seddon, but fortunately became apprised of their approach, in time to make his escape.<sup>9</sup> He arrived in the City yesterday.

The other detachment, that came to Ashland, was accompanied by a battery of Artillery, and approached on the Brook Turnpike, about six miles north-west of the city yesterday morning. They were promptly met and kept in check, and handsomely repulsed by a portion of Engineer troops, under Col. W. H. Ste-

phens, who manned a section of light Artillery. A duel ensued, and shots were exchanged for about two hours.

The enemy then withdrew in the direction of Mechanicsville, burning the trestlework of the Central R.R. across the Chickahominy in their retreat. Our loss in the fight on the brook road was, one killed and six or seven wounded, but we were unable to learn their names. Neither the force nor loss of the enemy was ascertained, as they carried their dead and wounded with them. We captured two prisoners, who were committed to Libby Prison. During the retreat of this column, they threw two or three Shells at the dwelling house of the Honorable James Leyers, which exploded in the yard, without danger. They stopped the carriage of Mr. John Ballard, took out both the horses, and carried off the horses of Mr. Godding. The latest report we have from this retreating column is that they had halted, five or six miles from the City, to take refreshments.

They are probably endeavoring to make their escape by way of White House. We omitted to mention a report that they saluted Camp Lee with a few Shells, but this lacks confirmation.

The detachment that went to Goochland, according to the statement of an escaped prisoner, included a large body of Negroes, mounted and armed. They seized and brought with them a considerable number of Negroes as they passed through the country, as well as a large number of horses, which were brought into requisition whenever others were exhausted and gave out. Before leaving the Central R.R. they impressed into service a negro guide to pilot them to the vicinity of the city, where they intended and expected, to arrive last night, to effect a junction, probably, with a column from the direction of Ashland.

The Negro, however, intentionally, or ignorantly, piloted them in a wrong direction, and they landed in Goochland as above stated, about daylight yesterday, for which they hung him yesterday morning.

It is reported that a detachment from this column went to the river at Mannekins Ferry, it was believed with the intention of

crossing it, if practicable, and coming over on the south side. Whether they succeeded or not, we have not learned. Some of the privates expressed regret at the burning of houses, but said they acted under orders. A Negro belonging to Stanard, and after being with them all day, feigned sickness, and being sent off under guard, three of our pickets galloped up, and captured the Yankee and released the Negro. About three o'clock yesterday afternoon, the enemy advanced toward the city by the Western or river road, evidently the same force that went to Goochland. They formed into line of battle, not far above the city, and from the brisk firing of musketry, heard in that direction about dusk, it is supposed that a fight occurred. The enemy were afterwards reported to have been repulsed. Several prisoners were brought in about eight o'clock last night. Up to the late hour of writing this, we learned no particulars.

The body of raiders is under the command of General Kilpatrick, celebrated in connection with the raid of last spring, over very much the identical routes. Besides the general destruction of property, one of the principal objects of the raid was evidently the release of the prisoners in this city, but the plan miscarried by the treachery or ignorance of this negro guide. It is not to be supposed that it would have been successful had it been otherwise.

The whole force is estimated at about two large Brigades, and whatever the object, they have won a title to considerable boldness, to say the least of it.—Later—Last night at about a quarter past ten, o'clock, brisk artillery firing was heard in the direction of Meadow Bridge or Mechanicsville, which continued half an hour. It proceeded doubtless from the column that retreated in that direction.

It was reported that a skirmish occurred earlier in the night on the Westham road, in which the enemy charged Hurley's Battalion and the 28th Virginia Regt., who were in charge of the main body, and were repulsed.

We heard of no casualties. An official communication received last night, expresses the opinion that Meade is advancing against Gen. Lee. The same opinion is entertained in a high offi-

cial quarter. If Meade means fight, it may begin today, the weather permitting, though it may be only a demonstration in favor of the raid on the city.

### Another Account

Richmond, Mar. 4th, 1864

In concluding our report yesterday, we stated that the raiders had succeeded in effecting their escape by crossing the Pamunkey at Piping Tree.

Subsequent information has satisfied us that only a small portion of the enemy's forces crossed the Pamunkey in their retreat. The main body, after passing Old Church in Hanover County, moved down into New Kent, on their way doubtless, to New Kent.

Yesterday afternoon, Col. Bradley T. Johnson, with about forty of his Marylanders, assisted by a detachment of the 9th Virginia Cavalry which had joined him, came up with their rear-guard near Tunstall's Station, when a skirmish ensued, resulting in the capture of seventy of the raiders. This is probably the last heavy pull that will be made upon them, and it is understood, that the remainder of the party had pushed on beyond New Kent Court House. It is somewhat difficult to ascertain the exact loss of the raiders in killed and wounded. It is thought that in the fight at Mick's and Green's Farms, they had seventeen killed, and it is known that they had not less than twenty wounded. In Hampton's night attack on them near Altee's he killed 4 or 5 and wounded as many more. In the several engagements which occurred they must have lost, at low estimate, 25 in killed and seventy wounded.

During the winter the Regiment received quite a number of recruits who were distributed amongst the several companies. The whole number furnished to the regiment from October 1, 1863 to October 1, 1864 was 886,<sup>10</sup> but this includes many that came in September 1864. An order was issued by the War Department to the effect that all Volunteers for three years who had served two years or more that would reenlist for three years



more should receive a thirty day furlough and a bounty of \$400, part down, and the balance in installments. One hundred and seventy-one men availed themselves of this, but Company E was the only company in which enough of the members reenlisted to enable them to go to Vermont as an organization.<sup>11</sup>

Colonel Sawyer was absent from the regiment most of the time, partly in Vermont, and partly in command of the brigade.<sup>12</sup> The laws or Regulations allowed every enlisted man who furnished his own horse and equipments \$12 per month for the use of them. On the 12th of March I bought a horse which I named "Ambrose" from the Brigade Mail Carrier for \$90 cash. The law was repealed in July so that I received \$45 for the use of him, but kept him till the end of the war and took him home. (Ambrose died in May 1877.) On the 19th of March we had a Division Inspection of horses, and all that were not "private horses" were branded U. S.

Lieutenant Colonel Preston was in command of the brigade and ordered a Brigade Drill, but it was deferred for several days on account of the storm. On the 7th of April the first one took place and several followed soon after, generally witnessed by General Kilpatrick and Staff and several ladies. We also had Regimental Drill by the bugle occasionally, and on the 14th General Meade and Staff stopped to see us. On the 15th we had Brigade Drill and saw the horse race between the Third Cavalry Division and the Sixth Corps horses. The Sixth Corps horse lost the race and a large amount of money changed hands.

On the next day we went up to Division Headquarters to take leave of General Kilpatrick, who was ordered west and was succeeded by General James Harrison Wilson, who had been a lieutenant colonel of Engineers on Grant's staff. General Pleasonton was also relieved and ordered to Missouri and was succeeded in the command of the Cavalry Corps by General Philip H. Sheridan. The 1st Vermont, 1st and 7th Michigan were present at Kilpatrick's headquarters and the general complimented our regiment for its behavior at Gettysburg. He spoke of being called Kill-cavalry, but claimed that his division was now larger than either of the other two.

General Wilson never was a good cavalry officer and never knew how to use them mounted. He almost invariably dismounted them, and sent the horses to the rear, and it was a standing joke for us to say that "Our

horses had started towards the rear and would keep aging till we overtook them, and consequently the one that started first will fare best."

On the 19th of April our brigade was transferred to the First Division, and, Colonel Sawyer being the ranking colonel in the brigade, we were the first regiment of the First Brigade of the First Division of the Cavalry Corps, and in a review of the Corps or the Army, would have been entitled to the right of the line.<sup>13</sup> We moved our camp about three miles between Culpeper and Cedar Mountain. We left a large number of "traps" in our old camp, and we found that nearly all of the army were changing quarters in consequence of the consolidation of the First and Third Corps with the other three. Very likely one object of these moves was to get rid of some of the superfluous baggage, as it was noticed that troops always started with too much and continued to throw away for weeks afterward.

Several of the men of the regiment went before the board at Washington to be examined for promotion in the Colored Troops, but most of them returned soon after this, having been unsuccessful for some reason unknown to me. Also, some were transferred to the Navy.

Colonel Sawyer returned to the regiment on the 20th and on the 24th the brigade was reviewed by General Custer. On the 27th the regiment was transferred back to the Third Division, much against our will, and moved back to Stevensburg near our old camp. The transfer was temporary at the time, and efforts were made to have the order rescinded, but after awhile it was made permanent. The brigade that we joined was commanded by Colonel Chapman of the 3rd Indiana Cavalry,<sup>14</sup> and constituted six companies of that regiment, the 8th New York and ourselves. We did not like to go into the brigade and he knew it and disliked us on that account, which dislike was returned with interest. He was a small insignificant looking person, and habitually wore spectacles, hence the title of "Old Goggles," by which he was generally known.

At this point Colonel Sawyer resigned and went home and was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Preston who was promoted to colonel, but he did not receive his commission until the day he was killed at Haw's Shop on June 3rd.<sup>15</sup>

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### The Wilderness and Sheridan's Raid

On the 2nd of May we were reviewed by General Wilson, and the next day there were rumors of a grand move. All the sutlers and camp followers had been sent to Washington and now the army was waiting for Grant to give the word "and let slip the dogs of war." About midnight we were routed up with orders to pack up and get ready to move. In the course of an hour or two we were on the road to Germania Ford, passing some infantry and pontoon train. We crossed just before daylight without much opposition and halted for sometime on the heights till the whole division was across, when we moved to the Old Wilderness Tavern at the junction of the Germania Ford road with the turnpike from Orange Court House to Fredericksburg. After waiting here sometime, we moved up the turnpike towards Robinson's Tavern, and then across the fields to the Plank Road, which we struck about two miles east of Parker's Store.

During this move we were passing over the Wilderness battlefield, but more particularly that portion to be occupied by the Ninth Corps on our side and Hill's Corps of the enemy. As we struck the Plank Road we thought we saw some hospital tents, supposed to have been abandoned by the enemy, but it turned out to be some sheds in a little clearing. We advanced to Parker's Store, where nearly the whole division went into bivouac, but a detachment was sent further up the road under Major Bennett and had a little skirmish with a small squad of the enemy's cavalry.<sup>1</sup>

About dark I was sent out with ten men on a wood road to the east, which I followed about two miles to the Catharpin Road, where we found pickets from the 3rd Indiana Cavalry. The pickets reported seeing a cloud of dust to the south, and citizens said that a train of artillery had moved in that direction. We returned, and reporting to General Wilson and Colonel Chapman, went to sleep.

That day a hundred thousand men had crossed the Rapidan, of which about eight hundred belonged to the First Vermont Cavalry.

The morning of the 5th we were up and moving in good season in obedience to the following order:

## Extract

Headquarters Army of the Potomac  
May 4th 1864 6 PM

The following movements are ordered for the 5th of May 1864.

1st. Maj Gen Sheridan commanding Cavalry Corps will move with Gregg's & Torbert's Divisions against the enemy's cavalry in the direction of Hamilton's Crossing. Gen Wilson with the 3rd Division, will move at 5 A. M. to Craig's Meeting House on the Catharpin Road. He will keep out parties on the Orange Court House Pike and Plank Road, the Catharpin Road, Pamunkey Road (road to Orange Springs) and in the direction of Twyman's Store and Andrew's Store or Good Hope Church....

By command of Maj Gen Meade

Companies B and D had the advance under Captain Cummings, and after striking the Catharpin Road we followed it about six miles, when the division halted and our two companies were ordered to go out about two miles farther to Craig's Meeting House and picket. When we had gone part of the distance the road forked and Lieutenant Sawyer with part of Company B was sent on that road while the remainder kept straight on. We had passed through a clearing on one side of the road when the advance reported the enemy in sight.

Captain Cummings rode up to investigate, and coming back in a hurry ordered me to take six men down to the left of the road, while the rest were ordered into line. I took the squad into the woods and while we were tearing down the fence to the rear the Rebels came charging down. We had struck Rosser's brigade, who were marching without any advance guard, and the instant they met us the whole command charged.

The men in the road fired a volley and fell back, while we to the left could not get back into the road, and fell back through the field, keeping along even with the column in the road. George Austin of Company B was hit by a Rebel sabre at the first onset and "scalped," but he made his

escape.<sup>2</sup> The column in the road kept rallying and checked the enemy, so that we in the field, although we had three fences to jump, came into the road with them at the further side of the clearing, all safe except Denison Badger of Company D, whose horse fell as he was jumping the last fence, and before he could remount he was surrounded and captured. He was carried to Andersonville and died there.<sup>3</sup>

The balance of the distance to the brigade we made in pretty good time, occasionally turning round and giving a volley, but we did not stop long, for as far as we could see the road was full of Rebel cavalry. We expected that the column would be ready to give the enemy a warm reception, as when we first discovered the Johnnies a message had been sent to headquarters with the news, but it appears that no notice was taken of it. But when our firing came nearer "very fast," Major Bennett was ordered to take his battalion and check them, and when we arrived back to the brigade, he was just moving up and received the full brunt of the shock.

The 8th New York, who were just behind our regiment, were nearly stampeded, and, indeed, I saw a good many of them run away myself, although they were in no danger, as we were between them and the enemy.

The Rebels were coming so furious that they were unable to halt soon enough and some of them ran right into our ranks. One Confederate captain snapped a revolver in Major Bennett's face, but it was "empty" and he was captured by H. P. Danforth of Company D<sup>4</sup> and several others were captured in the same way, being unable to stop their horses. After a few minutes of seemingly inextricable confusion, the enemy began to give ground, and as soon as our men could be got into position they were forced back over the ground we had been driven to near where the fight began.

We moved up mounted into the clearing to the left of the road and as the skirmishers in the woods beyond seemed to have their hands full, a lot more of us were dismounted and sent in. After we had been there some time, pretty hotly engaged, suddenly the left of the line gave way and then we all went back as fast as possible. The Rebels had flanked on the left. Pat Gilligan<sup>5</sup> was our left hand man and the first thing he knew a Johnnie had collared him and he was a prisoner. He was sent to Andersonville, where he remained for some time, but enlisted in the Rebel army, that is

what they called a "Galvanized Yank." I have since heard that he claims that this is not so and claimed pay from the government till his discharge, but there are plenty of men living today who saw him go out of the stockade with the Rebel recruiting agent.

As we went back from the woods across the open field, the Rebels came up to the fence, and resting over it, kept up a sharp fire. A few men took to their right in the woods, and after being in the Rebel lines for a few days, made their escape and joined us again. The rest of us, on foot, obliqued to our left, with the bullets rattling in the gravel, and just as we crossed the road into the woods on the other side, our one gun (the balance had gone to the rear with the horses) fired a farewell shot over our heads, and then limbered back too.

Soon after, a column of Rebel cavalry charged down by us in the road after the gun, but did not get it. We had struck just ahead of the Rebel skirmish line, who sang out to us to "surrender you damned Yanks." We paid no attention to this and as the woods were on fire, and the smoke quite thick, we were soon out of sight. We found out there was quite a lot of us, and putting ourselves under command of Lieutenant C. P. Stone<sup>6</sup> we followed an old wood road for a mile or so, and coming out into the clearing, found our horses just leaving. I jumped on to one, and after going a short distance, found mine, and getting on to him started back to the rear with the other one to meet the owner, but was not allowed to go, by order of one of Wilson's staff.

The enemy were following up vigorously, firing into our rear, and the whole division was retreating in confusion. There seemed to be no attempt to rally till we crossed a deep valley through which ran Hunting Run. On the further side of this valley our battery was stationed, and as the Rebels brought a few guns on to the opposite hill and opened on us, they returned fire "by Battery" and soon succeeded in dismounting one of their guns. The Rebels did not cross the run and after a while we withdrew several miles to the rear and eastward where we bivouacked and counted losses.

Major Bennett and Captain Grover were both wounded in the leg and First Lieutenant H. O. Wheeler of Company A through the body, while four enlisted men were killed and twenty-four wounded and fourteen missing.<sup>7</sup> About midnight we went on picket in the direction of Todd's Tavern, where we remained till morning when we were relieved by Custer's bri-

gade, and by reason of that escaped a severe fight, which he had that day with Stuart. After being relieved we went back to the wagon train, where we drew rations and forage and unsaddled and groomed. We then saddled up, and moving down the plank road a mile or so, formed in line of battle and remained for several hours till after dark, when we returned to near Chancellorsville and remained all night.

The ground that we had been on for last thirty-six hours had been traversed by Hancock's corps and a person could have walked miles on the blankets and overcoats abandoned without stepping on the ground.

On the morning of the 7th we watered our horses, formed in line again, saw some Colored Infantry pass, made out a Tri-Monthly report, and at about ten o'clock A. M. moved out two or three miles on the plank road where we supported a battery for some time. After this we scouted around some, and then came back to the train on the plank road, where we remained all night. Next morning we started for Spotsylvania Court House, and our battalion was sent to the right of the column, and losing the way, came back to the main road and joined the regiment at the Court House. Spotsylvania Court House consisted of a court house, a jail and perhaps half a dozen other buildings situated at the junction of several roads, and towards this point both Grant's and Lee's armies were moving at the moment, and if we had sufficient force to have held it, the history of the war would have been quite different from what it is.

Our advance had captured some prisoners and wagons and recaptured some of our men. We soon found that we were in danger of being "run over" by the Confederate army, and after firing a number of shell and cannister shots from our artillery, retreated across the Ni River. Company D was left on picket and captured about a dozen stragglers, mostly of the 13th Mississippi Infantry, Longstreet's Corps (now commanded by Anderson, as Longstreet had been wounded on the 6th.) They were lately from East Tennessee, but left Gordonsville on Wednesday (the 4th) and the van had been engaged on the 5th, as we learned from Woodbury and Call,<sup>8</sup> who had been cut off at Craig's Meeting House, and staying in their lines two days, heard them talking about Knoxville and Chickamauga. We had heard rumors that the Rebels were falling back, but they knew nothing about it, but claimed the opposite to be true.

After dark we started to join our brigade, but lost our way in this region of gloom, and stayed till daylight, when we found the command, but lost our rations which had been issued before our arrival. This was quite a serious mishap to us as we were getting ready to go on Sheridan's first great raid to Richmond and did not have a chance to draw any more till we reached the James River.

We marched towards Fredericksburg for several miles so as to deceive the enemy in regard to our destination, but at the point where the Telegraph Road crosses the Massaponax Run we joined Torbert and Gregg, and the whole command under Sheridan took that road and marched south all day. Flankers were kept out on the right and they had considerable skirmishing with bushwackers, but nothing happened to interrupt the march of the column. We captured the gun that was dismounted near Craig's Meeting House on the 5th along with several artillery men, on its way to Richmond. The weather was very warm and several men were sun struck, amongst the number was Joseph Benoit of Company D,<sup>9</sup> who had to be left and afterwards died in Rebel prison. In the middle of the afternoon the 1st North Carolina Cavalry charged our rear guard, breaking clear through the 6th Ohio Cavalry and capturing quite a number of prisoners. Wickham's, Lomax's, Gordon's and the other Rebel brigades followed us. I think all of Stuart's and Fitz Lee's commands were along.

We camped that night on the north bank of the North Anna, but Custer's brigade crossed over and proceeding to Beaver Dam Station on the Virginia Central Railroad, captured over forty cars, five engines, forty prisoners, three day's (1,500,000) rations for Lee's army, and recaptured about 378 of the Fifth Corps on their way to Rebel prison. We could see the light of the burning depot and cars.

On arriving at the ford we went to the river to water the horses. When we went to turn around and come back we were crowded into a large fire and otherwise dismounted by the column behind, which caused Captain Cummings to use some pretty tall language to the officer in command of the troops behind. Cummings demanded to know who he was and received for an answer "I am Colonel McIntosh, commanding the First Brigade and I order you under arrest."<sup>10</sup> There wasn't getting around this, so Cummings went without his sabre for several days.



We went to bed about one o'clock and were wakened up about three and saddled and got breakfast. Our march by the flank of the Rebel army had not been unnoticed for the long cloud of tell-tale dust showed just where we were and Stuart was after us. He had most likely marched all night, for several times during the night the pickets had fired on bush-wackers, to which we paid no attention, but just at daylight, before we had finished our coffee, bang went a gun close up to the pickets and "whish" went a shell, which struck just in front of the regiment, and ricocheting, went over without hurting anyone. A great many mouths were burned that morning drinking hot coffee, while the rest went on to the ground, and mounting up in "hot haste," we moved out towards them, but were not called into action, as Gregg pitched in and drove them as far as he had time to do.

We remained in line about an hour and then moved across the river, passing on the south bank some dismounted men in rifle pits, and the report was that when the Rebels came on after Gregg and tried to cross, they gave the Rebels a warm reception "with bloody hands to bloody hospitable graves." After passing the mill, which was soon on fire, our battalion was sent on to the flank and marched by file all day, having several skirmishes. The country we passed through today (Caroline and Hanover counties) was very pleasant, the trees just leafing out, the orchards in bloom, and all looking like a region never before visited by the tramp of hostile armies. We crossed the South Anna at Ground Squirrel Bridge and camped in a large field just south of it, which was on Mrs. Crenshaw's farm.

Gordon's brigade camped near Beach Farm on the South Anna, just a few miles from the "Yankee" camp.

It seems that Stuart after his attack at the North Anna had divided his force, and sending Gordon with his brigade to follow on the rear and check us all he could, had gone himself with his main force direct towards Richmond and was getting ahead of us. The road that he was on leading directly south was called the Brook Turnpike while we were to the west of it and the point where the two roads joined, about seven miles from Richmond, was called Yellow Tavern, from a large tavern that had once stood there, but of which nothing was left now but the chimneys. At this point Stuart posted his legions and essayed to stop our advance on the Confederate capital.

Just after daylight some of Gordon's men charged into the field where we were camped, but got out again very quickly, with some loss. We then moved out very slowly and soon passed part of Gregg's command with two brass 12 pound Napoleons faced to the rear, and before we had gone far we heard then speak. The guns were partly masked, and waiting till the Rebels were near, would open with such effects that while they did not check our advance one minute, General Gordon and a good many Rebels were killed, with comparatively little loss on our side.<sup>11</sup> A Rebel account says that the charging column here retired in good order, losing several men and horses by the Yankee grape and cannister thrown amongst them.

We soon struck a broad road, and forming column in divisions of eight files, moved along for about six miles, when the advance ran on to Stuart at Yellow Tavern. (On this raid we were called the "Sandwich" division for the reason that we were generally kept between the other two.) We, the 2nd Battalion, were dismounted and put into the woods on the left, but did not find anything, and moving toward the right, formed the left of a line of perhaps a thousand men. We moved forward and soon struck the enemy posted very advantageously behind a fence and a knoll, while we had no cover, and as we came in sight they opened fire and would have driven us back if it had not been for Major Wells, who rallied the line, and moving to the left a little, got us under a little cover and connected with a Pennsylvania regiment that had just come up.

We were shelled by a battery from opposite our right, but this was finally captured by a mounted charge by the 1st and 3rd battalions of our regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Preston and the 1st Michigan. In this charge Captain Ray and Lieutenant Watson were wounded and several enlisted men were killed and wounded.<sup>12</sup> About the same time we made a charge dismounted and followed the enemy for a mile or so, who had fled so precipitously as to leave a large number of cartridges, carbines and equipment on the ground, and from which we replenished our ammunition which was running low. Stuart was mortally wounded and died in Richmond soon after.

We returned to our horses and mounted up just in time to put on our rubber coats before a hard thunder shower. We moved over the ground that the mounted men had charged over, and coming back halted in line till about eleven o'clock in the evening, when we moved down the Brook Turnpike. We marched some and halted some, and about one o'clock,

while halting, a torpedo exploded under Company A about thirty feet behind me, which threw the column into some confusion, but did no serious damage except to let the Rebels know where we were. I was sitting down in the road, half asleep, holding two horses, when suddenly I wasn't holding either, but was mounted on a third.

Soon after we heard two guns fired as signals by the enemy to let the rest know what road we were on. Turning off the Brook Turnpike to the east just before daylight, we drew up in column by battalions and part of us were dismounted, partly asleep, when suddenly the enemy opened on us with musketry, shell and cannister at short range. In fact, we had halted right in front of some Rebel earth works without knowing it, and they didn't seem to be aware of the fact for some time. The damage was not great for the reason that we were so close that the shots went over mostly, but if we were ever so glad of anything, it was when the order came to fall back a short distance. When daylight came we pitched in with artillery and skirmished dismounted, some companies being dismounted three times during the day and fighting in midst of a heavy rain storm.

Sergeant Foster,<sup>13</sup> who carried the colors, having his horse shot, I took them for a day or two, but finally James Wright was regularly detailed along with Malcomb Frost of Company A as Color Sergeants and continued to do that duty till they were mustered out in November.<sup>14</sup>

As we fell back towards Meadow Bridge some infantry followed us, but were repulsed by our regiment, who continued to hold them in check while Custer crossed over the Chickahominy, and driving away a force there, allowed the whole Corps to cross in safety, our regiment being to the rear. We lost our way, marched and countermarched, and finally went into camp in a rain storm without any supper. All the time during the fight we could hear the cars bringing up reinforcements, and if they could have driven us, a serious disaster would have been the result, as the bridge was very rickety and the stream unfordable by reason of the mud. This was the fight at Meadow Bridge (or Strawberry Hill) and continued about twelve hours.

Next morning, after having breakfast, we moved on by Gaines Mill, the scene of Fitz John Porter's defeat in 1862, and the 2nd Battalion went on picket, while the Corps with the balance of our regiment as advance guard, moved to within about two miles of Bottom's Bridge and went into

camp. We slept quite comfortable that night, and moving next morning about nine A. M. crossed Bottom's Bridge, passed through White Oak Swamp and in the afternoon came out on Malvern Hill near the James River. There were some of our gun boats in sight, and the first thing we knew "swish, burr, burr" came a shell about two feet long right over our heads and buried in the ground displacing a cart load of dirt. A man was sent on top of a house to wave a U. S. flag, which soon caused them to cease this sport, which although it may have been fun to them, seemed likely to be death to us.

A large portion of the regiment went out foraging and we had plenty of forage for the horses and poultry as the like for ourselves. The 15th we moved down the James to Harrison's Landing and drew rations and forage from the transport on the river. The wounded, who had been brought along in the wagons and had suffered greatly, were shipped to Fortress Monroe from Haxall's Landing. It rained considerable that night and towards morning we heard a heavy firing across the river, which turned out to be Beauregard's attack on Butler, which resulted in Butler's falling back and being "Bottled up" at Bermuda Hundred.

The next day we remained in camp, except a detail for forage. The detail went up the James about five miles after corn fodder and found the country to be very beautiful, level and green, with the clover a foot high in some places. We drew on coming back the first ration of whiskey that was ever issued to the regiment, besides two days forage and three days pork and bread.

On the 17th of May we saddled up ready to move and then went into camp again and waited till dark. Company D on picket and Captain Cummings was Officer of the Picket. We improved the time while waiting to bathe in the James River. Just at dark we started and marched all night, but did not make much progress on account of the wagons, as the roads were poor. At daylight we halted to make coffee and were joined by Company D from picket, they having come on with the First Division.

We had two very hard showers during the day and sunshine afterwards. Crossed the Chickahominy about noon on a bridge our forces had just built at a point where there was an island with a fort on it, and marching very slow, camped for the night at Mechanic's Point. The 19th Company F went out foraging corn for the battalion, while the whole command

moved about three miles and camped at Baltimore Cross Roads. The next day we marched till two in the afternoon and then camped, except companies B and D which were out foraging. By this time our rations were pretty well used up and we were living mostly on mush and other compounds of which corn was the chief ingredient. This would sustain life, but was not productive of a great amount of energy.

On the 21st of May we heard firing off towards the west and saddled up in consequence, but did not leave camp till two o'clock next morning, when we marched to White House Landing on the Pamunkey (General Lee's plantation<sup>15</sup>), and going into camp on the great plain on the south side of the river, received rations and forage from some transports that had come up from Fortress Monroe for that purpose. The railroad bridge here had been rendered impassable by removing the planks, but these were supplied by old ties which made a narrow but strong way over which the other divisions were passing on our arrival and continued to do so all night. We had dress parade, and an order from General Sheridan was read in regard to forage and marauding. We slept that night on the south side and crossed the Pamunkey about noon the next day, leading our horses across the bridge, and forming the rear guard as we marched up the peninsula between that river and the Mattaponi. The weather was very warm and the horses suffered fearfully, so many giving out and being left that we counted the number for one hour and found it to be seventeen.

We camped between King William Court House and Ellistown. The communications of the region had always been down the York River and since the war began, this river being in our possession, they had been almost entirely isolated from the world, and I never saw a country that reminded me so much of what I imagined "Sleepy Hollow" to be as this. The sun shone bright, the birds sung, and the bees gathered honey from the flowers, but we saw but very few inhabitants, and they knew but little of what was going on, and seemed to care less.

The 24th we marched all day in a northwesterly by west direction towards the firing (the Army of the Potomac crossing the North Anna) but did not seem to get much nearer. We passed General Sheridan's headquarters and camped in the pine woods and most likely were in communication with Grant. The next day we moved about two miles and took the Richmond road. We crossed the railroad at Chesterfield Station, passing some of the infantry we had recaptured on their way to their regiments. We

found our wagon train nearby and on the 26th received our mail and two days rations. Grant had decided not to precipitate the army on the "spear head" presented by Lee at the North Anna, and as the infantry was to withdraw for another flank movement, at noon we crossed the North Anna on a pontoon bridge below where we crossed on the raid, and relieved the Sixth Corps, which was on the right. We drew up in line after dark, and remaining for two hours, recrossed the river above where we crossed it on a very narrow bridge that swayed badly, and coming into line, remained all night.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### Ashland, Haw's Shop and Across the James

On the 27th of May, while the Second, Fifth and Ninth Corps were being successfully withdrawn, and marching down the peninsula between the Pamunkey and Mattaponi preceded by the First and Second Cavalry Divisions, we crossed to the rear. At daylight we moved back a few miles and remained nearly all day, part of the Ninth Corps, including the 17th Vermont, passing us. Towards night we moved back to a church and our squadron went on picket. Company L reported that the Rebels were on this side of the river.

At daylight we rejoined the regiment at Chesterfield Station and the whole division moved down the road to King William Court House in rear of the army. The weather was very warm and we had to halt several times to rest the artillery horses, as the officers reported that it was absolutely impossible to proceed without the guns. We bivouacked for the night at a cross roads and church, having made about eleven miles. The next day we were rear guard and after we had gone a few miles were sent back to picket to the rear, as the command was waiting for the infantry to cross the Pamunkey. I was quite sick today. The wagons were only a few miles from us and some of the men visited them and drew rations as it was not often that they were so near.

About nine A. M. on May 30th we left the picket post, and after grazing our horses, crossed the Pamunkey on a pontoon bridge at Hanover-town. We moved off to the right from the bridge and remained till after dark. Just at dark there was some skirmishing in our front, so we moved back through the swamp and went up to General Meade's headquarters, and learned that we were in rear of the Second Corps and that Gibbon's division had charged three times and captured some earthworks.<sup>1</sup>

"Picketing to the rear" was much easier and safer business than "picketing to the front," and we were employed in that business nearly all day of the 31st of May, doing nothing but hearing heavy firing in front. Just at night we drew rations and were busily engaged in getting supper, when we received orders to move, and consequently had to drop all and go. We marched about four miles, countermarched a short distance, part

of us were cut off by the 3rd Indiana Cavalry, and finally came into line and laid down about midnight. In front of where we had left were six lines of earthworks that had been erected by our infantry and then abandoned for others further to the front.

Next morning we started out bright and early, and after the advance had had some skirmishing with the Confederate marksmen, they got out of the way and we passed on to Hanover Court House. This was near the battle ground of Fitz John Porter's some two years before and perhaps more noted as being the place where Patrick Henry tended bar for his father-in-law, and where he made his first plea in the celebrated case of the "Parsons," which so astounded his audience.<sup>2</sup> The court house was built of imported brick and was more than one hundred and twenty-five years old. Henry Clay was born about three miles south of the court house on the Richmond road in a poor pine region called the "Slash of Hanover."

After a time we moved on to the Virginia Central Railroad and tore it up for some distance and then struck for the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroad where most of the brigade halted. A detachment went up the railroad and burned the bridge across the South Anna after a short skirmish with the bridge guard, while Major Wells' battalion was sent south along the Telegraph Road, which here ran parallel with the railroad to Ashland, which was a mile or two south of that point. At Ashland the Confederates had a "Dismounted" or camp of instruction like our Camp Stoneman, I presume. It seems that the First Brigade under Colonel McIntosh had taken a road to the south of the one traveled by us, parallel with it, and the Telegraph Road that we were on ran across the other two, so that in due course of events we approached the road taken by the other brigade. As we neared the intersection, we became aware that the rear of that command (the 1st Connecticut Cavalry) was moving across it at a high rate of speed, with the enemy in Gray close behind.

The Rebels had nearly captured the ambulances, but we immediately came "left into line" and advancing on the road and through the woods, drove the enemy back some distance, but were in turn driven back ourselves. It was at this time that T. E. Bartleff, First Sergeant of Company F was killed.<sup>3</sup> The Rebels (Young's Brigade and the dismounted men from the camp) charged by us on the road taken by the 1st Connecticut Cavalry, so we fell back on to the road we came on. After fighting them some time, Major Wells got the battalion together and started back up the Tele-



graph Road just as the Johnnies attacked the 2nd Ohio, who were dismounted at the four corners where the roads crossed each other. After proceeding up the Telegraph Road to near where we had left the brigade we met General Wilson, who turned us to the right about, and directed Major Wells to communicate again with Colonel McIntosh.

This was rather more difficult than before, as the most direct route would be down the Telegraph Road as before to the four corners, but unfortunately the Rebels were on one side and the 1st Connecticut on the other side, and they were both shooting at each other across the road with all the skill and rapidity that they possessed, which, of course, made it extremely unhealthy for traveling on the highway.

Consequently, Major Wells took six or eight men, including myself, and striking into the woods to the west, reached the railroad, and proceeding up that soon reached the rear of the First Brigade. As we struck the railroad we found a dead horse recently shot, which we recognized as having belonged to Taylor (a buglar)<sup>4</sup> and from which I got some oats, and the other a pistol and rubber coat. I learned from Taylor afterwards that he had but just been captured a few minutes before we came along, and was concealed with his captors in the woods, so near that they saw us pass. Our coming had prevented their getting the property on the horse. Major Wells, after communicating with Colonel McIntosh, came back and sent me to General Wilson to tell him that Colonel McIntosh said "that his whole brigade was on the skirmish line and that if he should withdraw, the enemy might make a rush and capture his artillery, but that if General Wilson would attack with the other brigade, he thought they could drive the Rebels."

I went back the same way I came, and when I struck the Telegraph Road met Colonel Preston with the rest of the regiment and told him the word that I was carrying to General Wilson. He replied that he was just going up to make an attack with the 1st Vermont and for me to tell General Wilson that there was room for one gun on the road. Soon after this I met Colonel Chapman to whom I repeated Colonel McIntosh's message, and he replied that he "was just going up to pitch in with the 1st Vermont." I found General Wilson at the place where the command divided in the morning and gave my message to him. He replied that his artillery had all gone to the rear, but that he had sent the 1st Vermont up

to attack on the flank and then wrote a message to carry to Colonel McIntosh, with directions that if I was captured to destroy it.

I returned by way of the railroad and met the First Brigade battery coming down the railroad, and the officer in command was very glad to learn of me that he could move through to the highway at the crossing where General Wilson was. A little beyond I met Colonel McIntosh and all the brigade in full retreat, and just as I delivered the message, a shell from the enemy threw dirt all over us. Soon after this he turned off from the railroad, across the fields, to the Telegraph Road, where he met General Wilson, who shook hands with him and said he "was damned glad to see him." Soon after he ordered Colonel McIntosh to "Deploy the 5th New York and open fire to bring out the 1st Vermont who were getting all cut to hell."

It seems that just at the supreme moment when the First Brigade was withdrawing from the line the 1st Vermont had attacked on the flank and taken the attention of the enemy, who turned their whole strength on to our regiment and allowed the First Brigade to get away, guns and all. The consequence was that we had to withstand the brunt of at least two brigades of victorious Rebels, who, elated with the retreat of the First Brigade, advanced on the doomed regiment and were driving it back in confusion, except, of course, those who were unfortunate enough not to get back.

The 5th New York deployed mounted and opened fire with their carbines, but as our men were between them and the advancing tide of the enemy, they did about as much damage to us as to the Rebels, except perhaps the noise of the volleys convinced the Rebels that there was a reserve. Soon the road was filled with the debris of several regiments drifting to the rear, which tide General Wilson and his staff vainly endeavored to check, but giving orders to allow all of the 1st Vermont to pass.

Then the bullets began to whistle by, and the whole command, from General on down, moved back not in very good order to that indefinite, but often sought after place, "the rear," going back the same road we came up and stopping for the night at near the same place that we passed the previous night. Some efforts were made on the march to bring "order out of chaos," but many men were missing, besides those killed and wounded.<sup>5</sup>

The next morning we watered our horses, formed a new line and remained all day. Colonel Preston, Captain Edwards, Lieutenant Williamson, and several others came in, having been cut off and remained inside the Rebel line all night. It would seem that the results of our day's work on the 1st of June 1864 were that we had burned the bridge across the South Anna and saved the First Brigade from almost total annihilation. It rained severely the afternoon of June 2nd, and after dark the whole division started back and marched all night towards Cold Harbor.

At daylight the regiment halted and Companies B and D went on picket, where they remained till about ten o'clock, when they were recalled, and the whole division moved back on the road we came on about a mile, turned to the left, and soon ran on to Wade Hampton. Our battalion (under Major Wells) was ordered to "prepare to fight on foot," to which Major Wells said that we had been dismounted every day since we crossed the Rapidan, and to which Captain McVain replied that the whole regiment was going in.

We were on the extreme right of our army, which had just assaulted the enemy's works and had been repulsed with fearful slaughter. We occupied the ground that Burnside had left the day before. Our battalion went to the right of the road and the other two under Colonel Preston to the left. We had just taken position when we were ordered over to the left, and marching across the road and through the field in the rear of the other two battalions, who were in the woods and engaged with the enemy, till we had reached their left flank, when we faced to the right and moved up in line, intending to connect with the left of the two other battalions and extend the line farther on in the same direction.

Just as we entered the woods Colonel Preston came over to us and told Major Wells, and the men on the right of the battalion, that our right was in rear of his left a short distance and lapped by a little, so that when we moved up, we must be careful and not fire into them. He then went back towards the right and we moved up onto the line and engaged the enemy "Indian style." Soon after one of Company I cried out that "Colonel Preston was shot!" Several efforts were made to move up the command, which were only partially successful, but finally a few men of Company D got hold of his body and carried it to the rear, Major Wells assisting.<sup>6</sup>

My theory is that Colonel Preston, leaving his sword, but carrying his pistol, crawled up on his hands and knees in front of the line to reconnoiter, and arriving at a point about halfway between the lines, had made his observations, and then turning round had straightened up and started to walk back, when he was shot in the back through the heart, possibly, and fell. When we found him he lay on his back with his feet towards us, and it is generally understood that a person falls towards the bullet that killed him.

H. P. Danforth of Company D<sup>7</sup> was creeping towards Colonel Preston's body when he saw the Johnnies behind a clump of trees (very likely the same that shot the colonel) and standing up to fire at the Rebels, received a bullet through his shoulder that whirled him around like a top. He not so much hurt, but that he walked to the rear, and was sent to hospital. From hospital he went home on furlough and there died.

After getting the colonel back a short distance to a small brook, we laid him down and threw water on his face, which revived him somewhat, so that he made a slight noise in his throat, but said nothing that could be called speaking. We then placed him on a horse, holding him on, and proceeding to the rear, soon met Surgeon Hall, who felt of his pulse and said that he was dead. We tried to get the ambulances to take the body to White House, but the surgeon in charge said that a live private was worth more than a dead colonel, and there were more wounded than could be carried, so we made a box out of some bureau drawers, and putting it on to an old rickety wagon, we harnessed some horses with straw collars and proceeded to division headquarters about three miles to the rear where we remained all night.

Captain Cushman of Company E<sup>8</sup> was killed within two minutes of the time that Colonel Preston was shot, and in nearly the same manner. His body was placed in a box the same as Preston's, and next morning we took them to White House and had them embalmed and sent home. Captain Cummings went in charge to the White House having an order to do so from Major Wells and approved by Colonel Chapman and General Wilson, and should have been by General Sheridan, but we found White House before we did Corps Headquarters. On the road we passed the First Division and General Custer came and looked at the corpse and remarked that "he was the best colonel in the Cavalry Corps."

Lieutenant Colonel Preston's commission as colonel arrived the day he was killed.

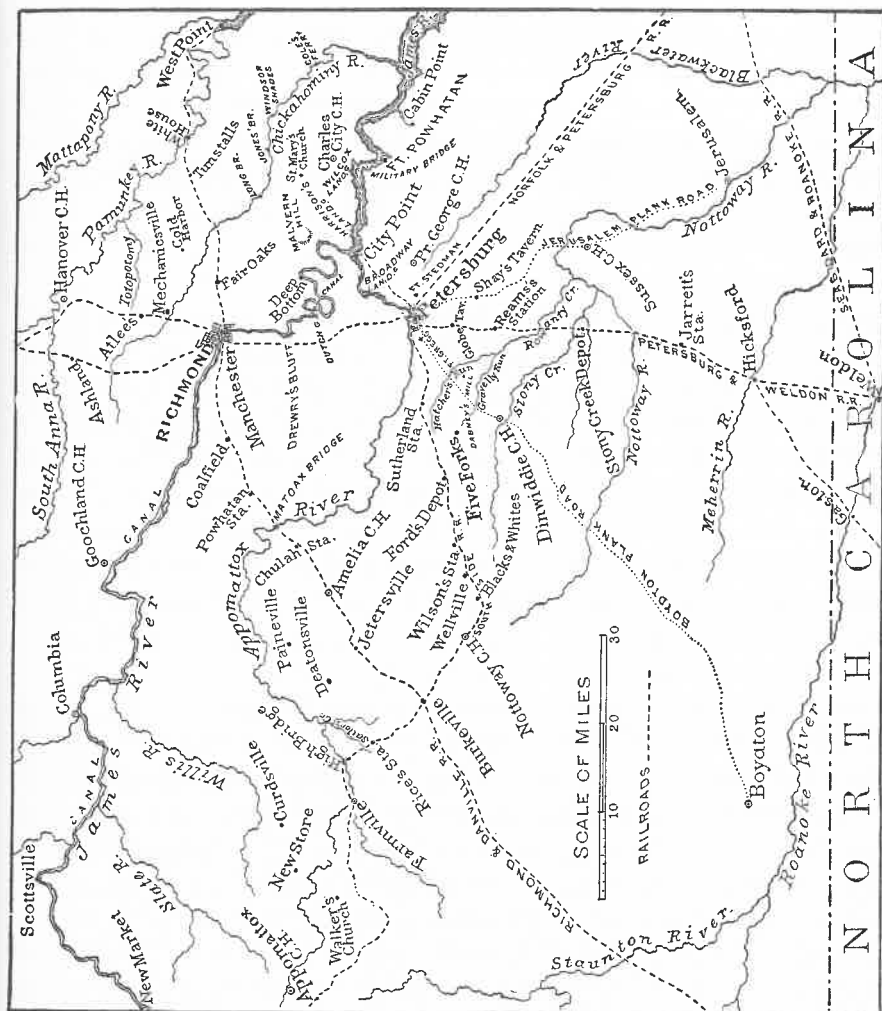
When we arrived at White House my horse "Ambrose" was so nearly played out that I could not get him into a trot with any amount of spurring, and I was pretty well used up myself, so that if we had not recruited for a day or two we would not, either of us, have lasted long.

We drew rations and forage and remained there till the 6th washing up and resting. H. J. Bickford and Charlie Hidden<sup>9</sup> went out to Old Church to get Captain Cushman's baggage, but could not find the train.

Soon after the death of Preston and Cushman the enemy retired and our regiment followed about a quarter of a mile to some of Burnside's earthworks and in the afternoon retired to the rear somewhat, where they remained for two nights and then shifted to the extreme left of the army, near Bottom's Bridge, where we rejoined them on June 6th and immediately went on picket.

Next morning Lieutenant Trussell and John Woodard went to the White House to get the adjutant's mare. Major Wells came down to the picket line with the balance of the battalion and advanced to the farther house in sight, as someone had seen some Rebels there, but they found none. Then we were relieved by the 3rd Indiana Cavalry. Just before dark the enemy fired a few shells across the Chickahominy, doing no damage. On the 8th of June we remained in camp nearly all day and we managed to get a couple of government square meals. Before dark the whole division moved down the Chickahominy about three miles and went into camp. We remained in this place (most of us) till June 12th, the longest time in one place from May 3rd to July 3rd, but we kept our horses in line, fastened to stakes, ready at a moment's notice. Companies D and F were sent to Jones' Bridge across the Chickahominy on the 11th.

In the afternoon of the 12th we heard chopping in the rear of our camp, and upon investigation, found it to be the pioneers making a road through the woods for the pontoons which moved before dark and did not wish to have the enemy see them. Soon after dark the cavalry started for Long Bridge across the Chickahominy (there was no bridge there) where, after firing a few shots, the pontoons were laid and we crossed over to the other side about midnight, and moved up towards Richmond.



SOUTHEASTERN VIRGINIA. 1864-1865

The cavalry and the Fifth Corps were to form the screen behind which the balance of the army was to cross the Peninsula and the James River. We would march a short distance, run into some Rebels, and while the advance was getting ready to drive them away, we would come into line, dismount, and just as we would get to dozing in good shape, would mount up and move forward again. We advanced in this manner all night, skirmishing with the enemy till about daylight, when we ran onto quite a force who were only dislodged after a sharp fight, when they fell back through a thick woods and off to the right across White Oak Swamp. Here we had a sharp fight, Battery E losing eight horses, but in three quarters of an hour some of the Fifth Corps relieved us. They had their hands full to stay there.

We drew back and moved off to the left on the Malvern Hill road and soon ran into a force of Rebels (which we soon learned was the 5th South Carolina of Hampton's Division) posted in the woods on the further side of a large open field. We moved into the field, formed line, and dismounted under fire, several men and horses being wounded. The dismounted men advanced in front of the enemy, while the 8th New York flanked them and the battery shelled them. In a very short time the Johnnies had gone to the rear double quick, except the killed and wounded who were left in our hands. I counted seven dead in one clump.

We advanced about half a mile, piled up some rails for breast works, and after waiting an hour or so, were attacked by the Rebel infantry in line of battle. We held them as long as we could and then fell back in "middling good order" without much loss to the edge of the woods where we drove them from, and then to our horses in the open field, where we mounted up expeditiously as possible, and drew sabre. The enemy came up to the edge of the woods, but no further for the time being, and opened fire. We were prepared, and expected, to charge them mounted, and no doubt should have done so if they had left the cover of the woods, but nevertheless they kept up so hot a fire that we became uneasy, and Major Wells, to keep us quiet, put us through the sabre exercise for a time.

While this was happening, Captain McVain came up and reported that General Wilson and staff were just having a first class dinner back in the woods.

I remember the noise made by the striking of a bullet on a horse's foreleg.

During the afternoon the noise subsided somewhat, so that we dismounted and got dinner. As Captain Cummings' darkey was cooking some grub for him, a bullet struck in the fry pan and the next thing seen of that "contraband" he was making tracks towards the rear. Some of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps came up and took post in the rear and somewhat to the right of our dismounted skirmishers. Occasionally our battery would fire over our heads. Just before dark the Rebels charged out of the woods along the whole line, while our infantry ran away without firing a shot.

The dismounted cavalry (1st New Hampshire<sup>10</sup>) stood up to the work in good shape and held them in check for some time, but were finally driven back, but not till the guns were brought safely away. We stood it for a short time, but the bullets came very thick and we broke by fours from the right, and moved to the rear. Sergeant Heath of Company C was killed<sup>11</sup> just at this time.

Arriving at the woods at the further side of the field, part of the regiment dismounted, and forming a line, held the enemy some time till the 1st New Hampshire could get back, and then the whole command drifted back to the point where the roads forked that we came up upon, and here along the edge of the woods General Crawford<sup>12</sup> had cut down some trees and made a barricade and behind which he had his infantry. As the cavalry came back, and the firing came nearer, General Crawford said to General Wilson "Get your cavalry out of the way or we will fire into them," to which General Wilson replied "Get your infantry out of the way or we will run over them." I presume that neither threat was executed, but as it was then dark, we continued to move back uninterrupted by the enemy, till about three o'clock in the morning, when we halted and slept till seven.

Then we moved off towards the southwest and in the course of the day (at ten o'clock A. M.) arrived at the James River below Harrison's Landing, where we unsaddled. However, the enemy soon attacked our pickets and we saddled up and remained so some time. The clover was knee high and the horses filled themselves and had a good rest. We drew forage and two days rations and then the whole brigade moved back on the road we had come on for about three miles. The two companies that had been on



picket moved by way of Charles City Court House to near Harrison's Landing where they drew rations, made coffee, and then rejoined the regiment.

Next morning two regiments and one section of the battery went out to near Malvern Hill. Before we arrived there, at the crossing of Turkey Island Creek, we ran on to the enemy, and the regiment was dismounted and marched down to the brook. The 8th New York, who were across the brook, were driven back and went to their horses while we held the line of the brook for sometime. Captain Edwards on the right of the road kept his command together and fired by volley, infantry style. As our men were engaged in firing rather wildly (as the Rebels were mostly behind trees), I asked Leonard Bishop of Company D why he did not fire with the rest.<sup>13</sup> "I have made up my mind not to shoot till I see something to shoot at," was the reply. The Rebels came very close to the brook before we fired at them and then fell back a short distance.

Lieutenant Williamson was shot in the thigh and died soon after in hospital.<sup>14</sup> Marsh of Company D<sup>15</sup> was shot in the shoulder, went to hospital and deserted. He was literally scared when the fight began and had to be driven on to the line. After a while we mounted up and remained in line for some time till several of our men came in from the left of the line. Major Wells and Captain Cummings also investigated the case of several men of Company B who, they thought, had left the line sooner than the circumstances demanded.

Towards night we fell back slowly to where we had started from in the morning. The weather was very warm and dry, making the roads extremely dusty. In the evening Companies B and D went on picket. We had an alarm during the night which I remember particularly from the fact that about that time I found myself in the saddle and very suddenly, although it was said to be nothing more than John Woodard firing at a hog.

We remained there till the next day (June 16th), being reinforced with the balance of the battalion in the afternoon. Just before dark the whole division fell back, and marching via Charles City Court House, arrived about three A. M. at Charles City Landing, where we camped till morning.

During the last three days almost the entire Army of the Potomac had moved across the Peninsula and crossed the James in steamers, schooners, and a pontoon bridge at Fort Powhattan. On the morning of the 17th we crossed the James on the pontoon bridge (I counted 102 boats), leading our horses, came into line, drew rations, went in swimming till about five in the afternoon, and then we started for City Point.

After dark some of the fences were set on fire by some improvident persons who did not consider that it was very likely we should need them all for wood, and others having thrown off copper cartridges into the fire, the noise of the explosions of which made it seem as though some heavy skirmishing was going on. At eleven P. M. we went into camp, unsaddled, and made preparation for supper, but soon received orders to saddle up and go back to the bridge. This we did with considerable grumbling, arriving at the bridge at daylight. It was reported that the object of return was to guard the bridge and some cattle on the other side, but when we arrived there the cattle were gone and the bridge removed. We unsaddled and remained there till four o'clock in the afternoon, when we started back and joined the brigade in the course of the night, then in camp near Prince George Court House, having marched sixty miles in the last twenty-four hours.

On the road we passed two dead colored infantry who were supposed to have been sun struck and left there. The 19th of June was Sunday and we remained in camp all day, except that we moved it a short distance, grazed our horses, and attended Divine Service by Chaplain Goodrich.<sup>16</sup> Some of Company B refused to attend and were tied up by Captain Cummings.

We here received our mail and I received a clean shirt, which was as acceptable as anything at the time, for such luxuries were very scarce.

The 20th of June was a quiet day, some being on picket on the Blackwater River, but on the 21st we received orders to draw all the rations we could carry and everything indicated a long raid, and next morning we started. Some four or five of us at this time messed together, and receiving a lot of beans (some four or five quarts), concluded to save them till we could get a good chance to cook them. We carried them on the raid some two or three hundred miles until the 29th of June at Reams Station when they were stolen by some misguided person (we not stopping long enough

to cook them) and I am very positive that he did not get time to cook them till the 2nd of July at Light House Point, and there we had rations in plenty.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### Wilson's Raid

We were routed out at midnight and got into line, but did not start till daybreak, when moving south and then west, we crossed the Jerusalem Plank Road and the Petersburg and Suffolk Railroad without disturbing them. At Reams Station on the Weldon Railroad were a few Rebels who retreated up the track while our men burned the station and tore up the track. We were now on the right and rear of the Rebel army and entirely separated from our army, as the command of W. F. H. Lee immediately started in pursuit of us. They attacked our rear at the station, but not very forcibly. A mile or two beyond there the road crossed a small stream and beyond that our regiment was left as rear guard.

We faced to the rear, and after waiting about half an hour were attacked by the enemy. While we were skirmishing sharply there came out of the woods and between our lines, a colored man and woman nearly frightened out of their wits, and we had hard work to make them move off to the right and get out of range. In a short time we fell back (or forward) and turned to the right, just as the enemy brought out a gun to near our first position and fired a few shells at us, without doing any damage.

A short distance farther on we went through a farm yard and faced to the rear. The enemy would come up in sight and skirmish and others tried to flank us. Captain Grover had command of six companies and kept the Rebels back from our main column for a long time.<sup>1</sup> When one company in front retired the one behind it would be at the side, or across, the road a short distance to the rear, and would stand facing to the front till the companies in the rear were posted, and thus they each retire successively from front to rear, and at no time did the Rebels dare charge us although pressing close.

At Dinwiddie Court House they were close behind us and we were glad to find the 5th New York drawn up in line, and as the enemy came up to attack, they received a warm reception. Just as we arrived there Curtis of Company D<sup>2</sup> was shot through the thigh. After a short time we moved on without further molestation, arriving at Ford's Station on the Southside Railroad about midnight where we rested three hours.

### Nottoway Court House

The advance had arrived before us, captured two trains of cars and had torn up the track. The engines were burning for some time and the whistle sounded all the time. Towards morning we moved on and spent all the forenoon destroying the track. In some places we found large quantities of wood piled up beside the tracks which we laid on the rails and set on fire, the expansion of the iron causing them to bend out of shape. Others pulled up the track, piling up the ties, setting them on fire, laying the rails across, and when they were hot, bending them down. We found several barns filled with tobacco, corn and cotton, said to be the "tithing" collected by the Confederate government which soon went up into the air in smoke, and of course was not wrong in regards the tobacco.

We halted at Black and Whites Station to feed. About noon the advance of our division ran on to the enemy near the railroad just east of Nottoway Court House. Kautz<sup>3</sup> small division had passed on through Nottoway towards Burkeville Junction and W. F. H. Lee's Rebel cavalry had moved by roads to our right and came in between us. The battery which had gone into woods, came back and nearly the whole brigade went in dismounted. The dismounted men charged, drove the enemy across the railroad, and if we had had a hundred men mounted to have charged, the Rebel battery would have been ours and the day won. But our general was not equal to the occasion, and the enemy receiving reinforcements, drove us back to near the starting point.

Sergeant Jenne<sup>4</sup> of Company B was killed in this charge and Sergeant Woodbury<sup>5</sup> of Company D mortally wounded. Afterwards some more of our men were brought up, put in on the left, and efforts made to advance the line, but without much success. Lieutenant Hall of Company E was killed,<sup>6</sup> and as Seaver<sup>7</sup> and myself were carrying back the body, a bullet struck the stretcher. Lieutenant Trussell was hit with a spent ball. Lieutenant Moore was shot in the knee, Lieutenant Greenleaf was seriously wounded, A.G. Call hit in shoulder, and D. C. Walker and Kingsbury slightly hurt.<sup>8</sup>

Towards night the enemy used their battery freely, throwing shell, cannister, and solid shot, cutting off the tops of the trees, but not doing much damage as our led horses were back out of range. We remained on

the skirmish line nearly all night, and just before daylight were withdrawn, mounted up and moved off to the left of the way we had been trying to go.

About noon we halted at Concord Church in Lunenburg County and George Austin came up and reported that Woodbury was dead and that they were agoing to take his body out of the ambulance and leave it.<sup>9</sup> Orders were sent back to have it brought up to the church, and three of us, with the pioneers, were left to bury him, as the column soon moved on. We buried him near the church, and taking a board from the desk in the church, cut his name and regiment on it, and set it at the head of the grave. We had no time to make a coffin, but wrapped him in a blanket, and although we shed no tears, he was sincerely mourned by all who knew him.

We marched with First Brigade, passing through Hungrytown and Meherrin Station, while the regiment was tearing up the Richmond and Danville Railroad, which was all afire as we came along. They camped near Keysville that night and we joined them soon after dark.

Kautz' command had struck the railroad at Burkeville, and proceeding along it towards Danville, had destroyed it pretty effectively. We had crossed over diagonally from the Southside Railroad to the R and D on the hypotenuse of the triangle, and nearly all day of the 25th were engaged in the work of destruction. The rail was what is called "strap rail," that is, a strap of tire iron laid on a bed timber of hard pine about six inches square, which is laid on the ties the same as any rail. All we had to do was to crack into the pine a little, set it on fire, which soon consumed the wood part, and left the iron damaged so as to be entirely worthless. In the course of the day we joined Kautz' command, and he taking the lead, we made for the great bridge across the Staunton River.

At nearly every house that we had passed for the last two days, when we asked the Darkeys where the Old Man was, they always replied that he had taken his gun and gone to defend the bridge, and when we tried for it, found it defended by about two hundred regular soldiers and nine hundred citizens, with some artillery. We picketed to the rear till after dark, but could hear the firing at the bridge. Kautz' men charged, drove the enemy, losing eight men, captured a small bridge across the Little Roanoke about one hundred feet long, and drove the enemy across the big river, but could not get to the bridge.

Our rear was attacked after dark, and we stood to horse till towards morning, when we moved off several miles, halting at daylight at a crossroads for breakfast. We found good foraging, but not too much time to enjoy it. We were now on our road home and marched all day in an easterly direction, passing through Christianville and bivouacked for the night at Buckhorn Creek. It was here that Cummings' Darkey "Ned" went to sleep standing up, currying a horse.

Next day (June 27th) we moved a few miles, and at a point where we struck another road, we halted, while the Contrabands were all collected together, along with the wagons. Nearly every man in our regiment had a servant, but the circumstances were such that they were obliged to part with them in a few days.

It was reported that Lee's cavalry was off to our left and would attack us, but about noon we started again with molestation, marched till after dark, crossing the Meherrin River at Safford's Bridge, and moving on the Boydton Plank Road to Great Creek, where we camped for the night in Lunenburg County. We had been marching through a very good country today (Mecklenburg County) which had not been visited by the army at all, and passed many fine plantations and houses. I presume some property was stolen by stragglers.

### **Stony Creek**

We started from this camp early in the morning, passed through Smokey Ordinary to the double bridge on the Nottoway, which we reached about noon. After halting for about an hour, moved on, and just before dark, while I was saying to Lieutenant Trussell that "we must be near the railroad and that when we got across that we should be all right," when we heard the carbines of the "advance," which told us that our way was blocked and that if we passed there, we must fight for it.

Soon the order came for us to "prepare to fight on foot," and what there was of us moved up to the line in the darkness with our artillery firing canister at a very short distance over our heads. An order came for thirty men to be sent over to the right of the road, and Captain Cummings with his battalion went in that direction, guided by the sound of the carbines. We advanced up to the edge of the woods where some other line had fallen back from. About this time Captain Cummings received a minie

ball through the face, and was helped to the rear, and soon after Lieutenant Gilbert Steward of Company G was mortally wounded.<sup>10</sup> Norman Kingsbury<sup>11</sup> of Company D was severely wounded in the hip and died soon after in Petersburg.

During the night, every once in a while, the Rebels would fall on our line, when our guns would open for half an hour, and the skirmishers would begin at one end of the line and run clear through to the other, like a row of bricks set on end so that when one was started, the rest fell one after another. Just before daylight the whole brigade was withdrawn and mounted up, moved back a short distance, and then dismounted and put upon the line behind some breastworks of fallen trees which had been chopped down during the night. The led horses were in the rear, and the balance of the command moved off to Reams Station.

Soon after several mounted men appeared on our left, beckoned to us, and then ordered us to "bring up those led horses." Some were about to obey this order when they were discovered to be Johnnies, and just then Company F coming up, a brisk fire was opened between the two parties. About this time the enemy charged the line of fallen trees, the led horses began to melt away, the Rebels to press harder, and soon all the horses were on the retreat.

We followed back on the road we came on for a quarter of a mile and then turned to the right (north) as the other brigade had gone that way. Some of the men not knowing this took the other road and were shortly captured by the enemy. Darwin J. Wright<sup>12</sup> took the left hand road and was never seen afterwards, except as a prisoner. He died at Florence, South Carolina. The regiment lost in this engagement seventy-two killed, wounded and missing.

It is a very delicate operation to withdraw a line of dismounted men engaged with the enemy and get them all mounted up, because if the horses are brought up to the line they are sure to be shot by the enemy's skirmishers, and if the footmen fall back to them, the enemy will follow up, generally so that the operation of mounting up and forming has to be performed under fire. It always seemed to me to have been very foolish, not to say criminal, that after this had been safely performed, the men were again dismounted and put upon the line, while the balance of the command moved off, leaving them to their fate, as it seemed.



We followed the northern road for about eight miles when we found the balance of the command at Reams Station engaged with the enemy's infantry and cavalry. Our brigade was so completely broken up by our forced retreat from Stony Creek (in which the horses were driven away before the men were) that we were not put into this fight. While waiting here and sleeping, some wretch stole that bag of beans from my horse that I had carried all the way from Prince George Court House, but had not stopped long enough while on the raid to cook them, waiting until we arrived safe within our lines. I am very certain that after that we did not stop long enough for him to cook them until we arrived safe within our lines.

Kautz got through, but the rest of us were not to do so, and soon after we saw the wagons and ambulances being "parked" and stripped of their covers. Upon inquiring we found that they were to be abandoned along with all the wounded who were unable to ride horseback. Lieutenant Gilbert Stewart of Company G, who was mortally wounded in the night of the 28th, died on the 29th. Lieutenant Moore of Company D, who was wounded in the knee, remained in the ambulance and was taken prisoner, but Curtis of Company D and Captain Cummings mounted up and rode with us.

We had had eight or twelve guns with us, but some of them were lost here and the last one was thrown off the bridge into the Nottoway that same day. We soon received orders to march back the same way that we came, the 1st New Hampshire in advance, our regiment next, and the rest behind.<sup>13</sup> After marching several miles I noticed a column of dust on our left, but never knew if it was made by our men or by the enemy. There was some firing in the rear and soon stragglers began to run up on each side. We received orders to draw sabre and not let one pass us in the road, but the stragglers went into the fields and thus got by. When we arrived at the Nottoway Bridge, the column was halted with our regiment in line on each side of the road and the command was reformed. There were about two thousand Contrabands with us and many dismounted men, but when we crossed the bridge none were allowed upon it but the mounted men in ranks, which was a great mistake.

Ours was the second regiment to cross, and we soon passed on out of sight, but from what I can learn from others, the events that took place at the bridge were terrible. The Rebel cavalry soon arrived and attacked the

terrified throng of Negroes and dismounted men who were still nearly all on the north side. A great many might have crossed along with the mounted men if they had not been prevented by the orders of General Wilson, but now the fear of the enemy was greater than of General Wilson, and they rushed onto the bridge a panic-stricken rabble, the strongest pushing the weakest off the sides onto the rocks and into the water many feet below. Some went up or down the stream and swam across, but the Rebels seemed to be inflamed with rage against the Negroes for running away, and leaving the "Yankees," would sabre the "Niggers" without mercy. Most of them were either killed or retaken, but about two hundred succeeded in getting across, and keeping up with the column, came around into our lines.

We marched all night long, sometimes halting when the advance ran on to a picket (or supposed they did) till they could form and charge them and we would follow up at a gallop for a mile or so, then walk for a mile and then another gallop. Just after daylight we arrived in the vicinity of Jarratt's Station on the Weldon Railroad where the column divided, part going directly to the station and driving off a Rebel picket, while some of us went to the right, but rejoined the column soon after crossing the railroad. About noon we crossed quite a stream (the Nottoway) by fording, the bridge having been burned. Some of the mounted men carried double and others sent their horses back to bring over the footmen.

After crossing the river we considered ourselves safe and camped for about three hours to rest, but not to eat or feed our horses, as most of us had nothing, and it was rather a poor country that we were in. Very likely its soil had been good once, but had been exhausted by tobacco.

Before dark we started on and marched all night in a northerly direction. About midnight we halted for nearly three hours while a bridge was being built across a branch of the Blackwater River, and very black the water was in the river too. The bridge was built almost entirely of rails, General Wilson working with his own hands. I would have given \$500 if I had it, for the privilege of laying down on the ground and sleeping as long as I wanted to, but this would, most likely, have resulted in a trip to Andersonville. H. A. Jenne of Company D was afoot and tried it, but was picked up by a squad of cavalry that followed us for that purpose, and was not liberated till about the close of the war, when he was exchanged at Vicksburg.

I sat down in the road while the bridge was being built, held my horse, and dozed some, and was rather sorry when it was completed and we moved on. Cummings and Curtis had hitched their horses to an old-fashioned carriage and rode in style for some distance, but during the night it broke down and they had to take to their horses again.

In the morning we came into line and halted long enough to eat breakfast (that is, those that had any at all) and then marched to Cabin Point where we went into camp, but after a short rest I had to go on picket with others and remained all night. Here we procured some flour and apples and had a good square meal. I unsaddled my horse and slept first rate. We were to start from here at two o'clock in the morning, but Lieutenant Trussell didn't wake up till four, for which Major Wells reprimanded him. We were rear guard and marched towards City Point. When within about two miles of there we halted, and while I was asleep beside the road a man went by riding "Old Clem," the horse that I had turned over at Warrenton the August before. Finally we came back to near Light House Point and went into camp.

Of this raid and its results Swinton<sup>14</sup> says as follows: "The co-operative cavalry expedition under Generals Wilson and Kautz met with more success. Striking the Weldon Railroad at Reams' Station, the force destroyed the depot and several miles of track. The columns then proceeded to the Southside Railroad-Wilson's division reaching it about fifteen miles from Petersburg and destroying it thence to Nottoway Station, where met General W. H. F. Lee's division of cavalry, and, after a sharp conflict, defeated him. Kautz reached Burkesville, the junction of the Southside and Danville railroads, on the afternoon of the 23rd. At this point he damaged the track considerably, and then moved to Meherrin Station, where he formed a junction with Wilson's column on the 24th. The two then destroyed the road as far as Roanoke Bridge, a distance of twenty-five miles. Further progress, however, was impeded by the enemy, who was found in force and could not be dislodged. In returning, Wilson met, on the evening of the 28th, the enemy's cavalry, massed at the Weldon Railroad crossing of Stoney Creek, where he had a severe engagement. He then made a detour by his left, and endeavored to reach Reams' Station, presuming it to be in possession of the Union force; but he here encountered not only the Confederate cavalry but a hostile infantry. Being largely outnumbered, he was overwhelmed and forced to retire, with the loss of his trains and artillery and a considerable number of prisoners. He

succeeded in crossing the Nottoway, however, and escaped within Union lines by their left and rear with the remnant of his shattered force. The first intimation General Meade had of Wilson's situation, was in intelligence by one of his aids, who cut his way through from Reams' Station. The Sixth Corps was immediately sent thither, and Sheridan ordered up with the cavalry; but before they could reach that point the affair was over and the enemy had withdrawn.

Such raids on the communications of the enemy had frequently been made by both armies, and generally with impunity; but the disastrous upshot of this expedition showed that such detached columns operating far from the main body must always be in a perilous situation, if there be vigilance and vigor on the part of the antagonist. The present raid had inflicted considerable damage to the Confederate communications; but it was soon repaired, and it is doubtful whether the temporary advantage gained over the enemy more than balanced the losses in men and material suffered by the expeditionary force."

Company D started on this expedition with thirty-seven men and three officers and on the 3rd of July we reported fifteen men commanded by a sergeant for duty. Of the government horses that started only six returned.

We were camped on a hill above the James River and in sight of City Point across a bay. Gould the sutler joined us here. We were all ragged and dirty, and requisitions were made for clothing. Two tri-monthly and one monthly return and five muster rolls had to be made out. We also got hold of some newspapers and learned the news. While in this camp Major Wells received his commission as colonel and Major Bennett joined us as lieutenant colonel. "Old Goggles" also appeared as a brigadier.

On the 6th we received some clothing, except pants and boots which came next day. Till the 13th we were engaged in making out the muster rolls, resting, and making up for lost sleep. On that day we completed the rolls and Jimmy Abbott<sup>15</sup> and I carried them to City Point to be signed, as two of our officers were in hospital there. On the road we passed the gallows where two men had been hung for rape. On the 17th we had Sunday morning inspection, and in the afternoon went to Prince George Court House on picket, relieving the 1st Michigan Cavalry. Companies B and D went down the road, east, to a church, and as Whitney was quite sick, Boomhour took his place.<sup>16</sup>

### Picketing the Rear

On the morning of the 18th, Company D and Lieutenant Barrows<sup>17</sup> went on a scout to the southeast to find Colonel Devins' pickets. We proceeded on the straight road for about eight miles when we struck the Petersburg and Suffolk Railroad, and then coming back five miles turned to the left and soon struck the railroad again, where we found some of Burnside's colored troops. After going about four miles farther we found the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry and then we came back to the church where we started from, arriving there about noon. In the afternoon we had a grand stew made out of a hog's shoulder, which we drew, and the Color Sergeants Wright and Frost<sup>18</sup> came down and dined with us. The 19th was rainy, but in the afternoon we were relieved by the 6th Ohio and rejoined the regiment at the court house.

On the 20th of July "Boots and Saddles" sounded soon after daylight, so we saddled up and moved off after getting breakfast. We took the wrong road once, but about noon reached our stopping place, which was a deserted camp of the 6th Corps. We found plenty of stakes, poles, and wells that they had left.

The next day we drew some grain, pork, and potatoes. Along in the forenoon we went on picket and relieved the 3rd Indiana Cavalry. Our squadron went on post first and found the Rebel pickets in sight and quite sociable. Some of the men exchanged papers and had quite a chat with them. They belonged to two Maryland regiments.

On the 22nd of July Company D went on post about six o'clock A.M., but the Johnnies wouldn't have any intercourse as one of their men deserted to our line this morning. About noon we were relieved by the 3rd Indiana and went back to camp.

We packed up on July 23rd and moved near brigade headquarters and waited two hours for the rest of the brigade. Fell into column with them and marched to our old camp at Light House Point. We had just got unsaddled in the old camp when we had to move to a new one about fifty rods away. At this time five of our men who had been at First Division Headquarters as orderlies returned to us. The next day we were inspected by the Brigade Inspector by squadrons. Rained all night.

I was not very well myself on July 25th. We had dismounted drill in the afternoon. On the next day we had the same, except for mounted drill in the morning. On the 27th we sent some men down to the wharf to unload grain and whiskey. The whole regiment drilled under Captain Grover. We had dress parade at sundown. The following day was the same routine, but the Reveille sounded at four o'clock A. M. on the 29th and at six o'clock we went on picket relieving the 8th New York Cavalry at Prince George Court House. Companies B, D, and F were sent back on the road we came on, but were withdrawn to the court house at night and drew some grain.

### **The Explosion of the Mine**

At about half past four on the morning of the 30th we were awakened by the explosion of the mine in front of the Ninth Corps and the heavy cannonading that followed. We moved out with the balance of the division to where we had been on picket a few days before, drew some ammunition, while what was not used was abandoned. Moving up a little farther the whole brigade was dismounted and put upon the skirmish line in a piece of woods, but in getting there we had crossed a small clearing in sight of the enemy. They were in another wood and said to be about two miles from the Weldon Railroad, while between us was a large open field with a barn or some other building about half way across. We all expected to have to charge across this field afoot, but we generally all decided that we would rather be mounted and strike for the old barn first. Company D was on the extreme left of the line and received orders to look out for the flank when we charged. We could see the enemy moving about in the edge of the timber and I presume that they were fully prepared for us.

We remained here about three hours, with the sun very hot, expecting orders to advance every minute, but they never came. I suppose that if the assault at the "Crater" had been successful, we should have charged and very likely had some hard fighting. Finally about sundown we were withdrawn back to camp, where we stayed till about eleven o'clock P. M. when Company D went on picket.

At daylight the next morning we were sent back to the regiment and stayed in an old Sixth Corps camp till the afternoon, when we reported to Captain Grover and went on picket at the old place. Just at dark we were

relieved by the 8th New York Cavalry, drew three days' forage, and went back into camp.

We packed up at seven A. M. the morning of August 1st and went to Lee's Mill. We watered our horses in a pond full of dead fish, went back a little distance, and camped. We laid in camp all the next day, except some hunting after blue berries. There was considerable whiskey in the camp, and Elder Nownes<sup>19</sup> was tied up for not treating the colonel with proper respect.

On the 3rd of August I got a pass from the colonel and went into the Corps Hospital after Vance.<sup>20</sup> My route was along the Jerusalem Plank Road and through part of the Second Corps. I took supper with Vance, and after washing myself in the Appomattox, stayed all night. Vance was discharged from the hospital in the morning and we both went down to City Point and bought some things of M. W. Sargent.<sup>21</sup> We saw Norris<sup>22</sup> in the convalescence camp. We found the regiment in the afternoon just where we had left them. Just after dark we saddled up and unsaddled once or twice, but finally the whole brigade marched to General Gregg's headquarters on the Suffolk Railroad where we remained all night.

Jubal Early was at this time raiding around in Maryland and it was now decided to send us there to see to it.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### Back to the Shenandoah Valley

On the 5th of August the brigade marched to City Point and camped to await transportation for Washington.

The 6th and 7th we passed in camp, except that Vance, Wiggins<sup>1</sup> and myself got a pass and went to the Point and to the Corps Hospital. We brought a codfish apiece, but someone stole Vance's. We had inspection and dress parade at sundown while waiting for the boats. On the 8th the whole brigade embarked for Washington. Companies B, D, F and H were on the Kennebec along with the colonel. We dropped down the river in the afternoon and during the night anchored above Fortress Monroe.

During the 9th we passed the fort after stopping there a short time. After we had left City Point we found on board two men that did not belong to our regiment. They said that they had come out as recruits for the 5th, but on arriving there found that it had embarked for Washington and they were returning as soon as possible so as to join it at Washington. The first part of the story we believed, but not the last part. The general impression was that they were "bounty jumpers" who were trying to desert, and accordingly the colonel ordered them under guard. It was generally understood that these two men thought they knew how to play "Poker," but that they did not leave the boat so rich by \$400 as when they came aboard.

We anchored in the Potomac at night about halfway up from Point Lookout, but daylight we steamed on and arrived at Giesboro Point about noon where we disembarked and went into camp about a mile from the landing. This was between the East Branch and Camp Stoneman. On the 11th a lot of our men who had been in Camp Stoneman were mounted up and joined us, and on the 12th we signed the payrolls and were paid off before noon. We sent Jimmy Abbott out after something to eat, but he could only find some pies and cakes.

Several of the officers went over to Washington on a spree, and it was reported that General Chapman lost his money, his "stars" and his reputation in a place of doubtful reputation.



The government had repealed the act allowing pay for the use of "private horses" and there were several of us who owned them, and as we were not getting anything for the use of them, we tried to sell them, but before we had time to effect any arrangements we had to move. We drew rations and left camp soon after dark, marched through Washington and Georgetown, across the Chain Bridge, up by Fort Marcy, where we camped for the night. We were very fortunate in getting our pay when we did, as some of the regiments had to march without it. The 5th New Yorkers were of this number, and as they passed the White House they kept up a continuous screeching of "Greenbacks! Greenbacks!"

I was quite unwell and had a pass to ride in the ambulances, but was unable to find them. While I was sitting on the curbstones to rest in Washington, some girls came along and gave me some peaches. While in camp at Giesboro I had received by mail a soft felt hat, but tonight someone stole it from under my head. I had supposed this impossible, but gave it up now.

We remained here till the afternoon of the 13th, when we marched to near Dranesville, where we remained until the 15th. That day we started before daylight, marched to near Leesburg, halted about three hours, moved through the town, and camped. The next day we crossed the Blue Ridge at Snicker's Gap and went so far as Berryville. A few miles beyond Leesburg the road is quite hilly and crooked, and the train being scattered along considerably, some of Mosby's men succeeded in cutting loose and running off a few mules and horses.

Being absent from the regiment by reason of sickness, I copy Colonel Wells' report of the operations of the command for the time I was absent from the regiment.<sup>2</sup>

"...From the 13th to the 16th we marched through Drainsville, Purcellville, Snickerville, through Snicker's Gap, to near White Post in the Shenandoah Valley. On the morning of the 17th, moved to near Newtown, from thence to Winchester; here we remained for several hours in line of battle.

The 3rd Cavalry Division had orders to cover the rear of the infantry. Lieutenant Mitchell in command of Company I, was or-

dered to remain, after all the regiment had been withdrawn, until he was ordered to the rear; he received no orders at all, but remained until almost surrounded, before leaving his post.

The command marched most of the night, halting at Summit Point, at about 8 a. m., 18th; the regiment remained on picket during the day. The command remained at this point until the 21st, when the enemy's cavalry and infantry attacked us; after skirmishing for several hours, the command fell back to Charlestown; this regiment forming the rear guard.

From the 19th to the 21st., Lieut. Col. John W. Bennett was in command of the regiment. I was excused from duty by the surgeon.

On the morning of the 22nd, after a short skirmish, the command fell back to Bolivar Heights. A portion of the regiment was on picket until the 24th. On the 25th moved with the Division to near Kearnsville, where we had a brisk skirmish for several hours; returned the same evening to Bolivar Heights. This regiment covered the rear. While returning to camp, several attempts were made to drive our men, but their advance was each time promptly repulsed.

At 2 a. m., on the 26th, we moved through Harper's Ferry to Boonsboro', Md. On the 27th we marched to Sheppardstown, the 28th we recrossed the Potomac near the last named place, and marched to Charlestown, Va. On the afternoon of the 29th, two battalions of the regiment made a reconnoissance to near Berryville; the command advanced to Berryville on the 30th.

On the 31st this regiment made a reconnoissance to near Newtown, moving through Millwood and White Post, returning the same evening to camp, where we remained until the second (2d) day of September, when the command fell back to Charlestown. The regiment remained on picket at Cable Town until the morning of the 3rd, when we joined the brigade, which made a reconnoissance to near Newtown, returned the same evening to Millwood and bivouacked. On the 4th we returned to Berryville, where the

command had a skirmish with the enemy's cavalry; this regiment supported a battery.

On the 5th, the regiment was ordered to Harper's Ferry, to escort an army train to Berryville, arriving there on the 6th. On the 7th the Division made a reconnoissance to near Winchester, returned to camp the same evening; here we remained (a portion of the regiment doing picket duty) until the 16th, when part of the brigade made a reconnoissance to Paris, returning to camp in the evening of the 17th...."

From August 16th till the 12th of September I was absent from the regiment. The following is my diary for the time I was gone.

August 16th. Moved out through Snicker's Gap where we found two wounded infantrymen of some Ohio regiment who had been left there by Mosby. Crossed the Shenandoah River, moved out beyond Berryville and halted all night. The company went by just before dark.

August 17th. Moved in the morning, turned to the left and struck the Front Royal Pike and came into Winchester on that road. Went through the town and parked on the other side where we stayed till dark. Along in the afternoon the Rebels advanced and before night there was quite a drill in progress, the skirmish line being more than two miles long. Just at dark the whole force fell back and gained a short distance on the Martinsburg Pike and then turned to the right where we stayed all night.

August 18th. Moved back to the station in a rain storm and halted while the cavalry were posted in position to meet the enemy. The sick in the ambulances were inspected, some sent to their regiments and the remainder sent to Sandy Hook and left in hospital.

August 19th. Stayed inside the barn nearly all day. Went up to breakfast, but had my dinner and supper brought to me.

August 20th. Went down to Sandy Hook and bought some cider. Took a walk up on the hill. In the afternoon we all went to Baltimore. Had to ride in box cars.

August 21st. We got into Baltimore at daylight, went in to Ward C of Jarvis Hospital and got some clean clothes.

August 22nd. Got a pass and Larkin and I went downtown. Had dinner and I bought a captain's blouse. I sent \$60 to Henry by express. Rained in the afternoon. Got back at 5 PM and found myself rather lame.

August 23rd. Laid in bed nearly all day. The New York cavalry lieutenant went to Annapolis. Sold him my suspenders and had his promise of a pass to go downtown and get some new ones.

August 24th. Laid in bed all the morning. After dinner they took our names and sent a lot of us to Annapolis. Rode to the steamer on an Army wagon. Arrived at Annapolis after dark and had to wait two hours for the ambulances. Went to Camp Parole Hospital. Quarters like those in Camp Baxter for 3rd Vermont.

August 25th. A surgeon came in and ordered one 4 Pills. Tried to get a shirt at the Sanitary Commission, but could not. Took a cold bath. Rather sick all day.

August 26th. I saw one of Company A who was captured at Reams Station. Tried to buy a pair of pants.

August 27th. I bought a pair of pants for 3.25 and tried to get some jackets put in, but could not.

August 28th. I received a letter from home. Was marked for duty and in the evening sent over to the other barracks. Went to church. Stole a blanket as I had none and nothing but bare bunks.

August 29th. We were called out and the cavalry were put in a squad by themselves and sent back into the same barracks. Bought me a new shirt for 3.25 and changed my clothes all through.

August 30th. A squad was called out to go to Camp Stoneman. I asked the provost marshall to let me go but he said no, so I fell in with them. He told the lieutenant in charge if there was anyone along whose name was not on the roll to bring them back, so as soon as we arrived in Washington, I got out on the other side of the cars and made for the horse

cars without being discovered. Went up to the Campbell Hospital and stayed all night with Uncle Young and George Ferry of Company I.<sup>3</sup>

August 31st. I stayed till after dinner and Uncle Young got me a pass to Camp Stoneman from Leslie Baxter. Took the horse cars and came across Packard<sup>4</sup> and went to the yard with him. Had supper as a restaurant, went up the Family Hospital and stayed all night.

September 1st. Packard got a pass for me and we went down to the Express Office. Went to a restaurant, had dinner and then took the horse cars for the Navy Yard. Left Packard there, took a coach for Camp Stoneman and reported to Sergeant Hyde. Found Hyde, Adams and Henry Moore there.<sup>5</sup>

September 2nd. Carried my clothes down to get them washed. Went out to Dress Parade.

September 3rd. Went over to the Provost Marshall but my box had not come. Got shaved and tried to find a tin pail. Went down to the brook and washed myself all over.

September 4th. Had Sunday morning inspection by the colonel commanding the corps. Dan and I took a walk out into the country. Cooked some beans for dinner.

September 5th. Hyde, Adams and I went down to the brook and cut some timbers for a bunk. When we got back found they had drawn horses. I drew a chestnut one, very green. Saddled him and rode over to the Express Office.

September 6th. Saddled up, tried to mount, but the horse jumped and threw me. He jumped up and down several times and then I got on to him. Rained hard all night.

September 7th. Got all ready to go to the regiment, but did not go on account of arms. Sent my old diary home.

September 8th. About 200 of us started for the Shenandoah Valley. My horse ran away over by headquarters and I broke my curb chain. Fell behind and bought a hatchet in Washington. Leashure, Robinson and I

had dinner in Georgetown.<sup>6</sup> Followed the detachment out on the Tennytown Road and stopped at a barn during a rain storm. Did not overtake the detachment that night, but stopped in the woods near a school house.

September 9th. We were going to a house for breakfast, but came in sight of the rear guard and had to chase up. After we left Poolesville Guyett<sup>7</sup> and I fell out, went to a house, washed ourselves, had dinner and a canteen of cider for 1.00. Bought a tea pot full of honey and some apple butter. Caught up with the boys after dark between Point of Rocks and Berlin.

September 10th. Had potatoes and ham for breakfast. Marched thro' Harper's Ferry and camped on Bolivar Heights in a small orchard.

September 11th. Rained all night so that we were completely soaked. Saddled up and guarded a train out to Berryville. Got some apples at Charlestown. Showers and sunshine all day. Camped near General Wilson's headquarters that night. Put up our tent and had a good supper. Some of the boys went to the regiment.

September 12th. Led into line and the roll was called. Dan and I went to the Vermont Brigade and saw Captain Lee, Lt. D., Dr. Merrill &c.<sup>8</sup> When we came back found the detachment gone, so went down to the regiment. They were just being inspected by Captain Stone.<sup>9</sup> All the men that had serviceable horses had to go out after Mosby. Lieutenant Trussle tried to have me let my new horse go out, but he did not go.

September 13th. Marches<sup>10</sup> and I worked on the pay rolls. I went out to an orchard near the pickets and got some first rate apples. The boys came in after dinner and we had to move our tents and build a railing.

I rejoined the regiment on the 12th of September, then in camp in a pleasant pine and oak wood near Berryville. Mosby's men at this time were doing considerable damage coming inside of our pickets dressed in our blue clothing and capturing men and horses. There was a pump near our camp where the men used to get water, and it was reported that some of our men, while pumping water there, were approached by other men in blue with canteens, ostensibly going after water, but when they were close by, they (the Johnnies) pulled out some revolvers and ordered the surrender of the "Yankees" and took them across the Shenandoah to Richmond.

A small detachment was sent out today after these men, but I believe found nothing.

About this time we were quite busy making out the payrolls, which were finished on the 15th.

The region round about here was very fertile and included a great many fine orchards, the fruit of which was ripe at this time, and we all patronized them to a great extent. Fried apples will go well any time.

About this time a Captain Mobley appeared on the scene, a sort of imitation of Mosby as when he first began his career.<sup>11</sup> He used to prowl around our pickets, occasionally picking one up and running him over the Blue Ridge. Just at night a detail of about four hundred men from the brigade "with good horses" under command of General Chapman, went across the field to Snicker's Ferry where we forded the Shenandoah, and then crossed the mountains which are close to the right bank of the stream at Snicker's Gap. The road up the mountains is very steep and stony, all the gravel having been washed off by the rains, and, of course, no repairs were made during the war, except those that were absolutely necessary for the passage of an army. Arriving at the foot of the Blue Ridge on the east side, Lieutenant Mitchell<sup>12</sup> with about ten men kept the pike towards Middleburg, while the main body turned to the right and followed the foot of the ridge, arriving in Paris at the foot of Ashby's Gap at daylight.

Several houses were searched on the road, but no one found that I knew of. Company D was sent off into the village to search the houses. We found a McClellan saddle and one man; also in a store, two of our men (infantry) who had been wounded and captured. They had no guards over them and reported that they were well treated. When we told them that we had about four hundred men they advised us to get back home as soon as possible as Mosby had about six hundred men and would, of course, soon be after us. We had no ambulances with us, so could not remove the men, and I never knew what became of them. The Ladies of the house we searched were very free in the use of their tongues.

The command halted in a grove at the edge of the village, fed the horses, and had breakfast. Soon after the enemy began to show themselves on the hills around and fired at us, but at a safe distance. The column was started back on the pike towards Upperville, Company D in the advance.

As soon as we were gone they came down into the road from both sides and followed along after us. As we rose of the knolls in the road we came right on to two Johnnies in the road who turned and ran their horses towards Upperville. A short distance to the right of the road was a high hill and on this were quite a lot of cavalry.

Company D was deployed as skirmishers while Company F went to the right, and the rest of the regiment supported. When we arrived at the top of the hill the bushwackers were gone, but soon appeared on the top of a neighboring one. In the woods we found a few horses which were duly appropriated. We then withdrew down the hill and resumed our march, we being the rear guard. They followed us all the way through Upperville and beyond, but when they came too close, we would face around in the road and give them a few shots. At first they would mind nothing about this, but something soon changed their minds.

Now whenever we faced to the rear every "Johnnie" would disappear as sudden as though the ground had opened up and swallowed them up, but presently they would all reappear as usual. At Green Garden Mills where we left the pike, making a square turn to the left, they made a rush across the corner, trying to cut off and capture two men who were on the flank, but we gave them a few shots which checked them. When we arrived at near Snickersville the enemy had ceased to follow, but could be seen on the mountain.

The 8th New York Cavalry had moved along the top of the Blue Ridge, and when they reached the Gap, they halted, unbridled and fed, while we picketed to the rear, down on the plain below. By and by we heard a yelling, followed by a scattering fire of carbines and pistols, and then came a stampede of horses down the Leesburg Pike. The enemy had collected together quite a force, and following along the ridge, had found the 8th New York in the Gap with their horses unbridled and many of the men asleep, having been out all day and all night. They charged the 8th with their usual yell, thus stampeding the horses, killing three men, and capturing fifteen or twenty more. Most of the men had their carbines strapped to their saddles, and, of course, these went away with the horses, which was the cause of a General Order's being issued forbidding this practice.



We (on picket) stood to arms expecting an attack, but the Rebels were charged in turn by the 22nd New York, assisted (I believe) by part of our regiment, and driven back. The three New Yorkers and one dead Johnnie were buried and then we moved on, crossed the Shenandoah, and arrived at camp in the evening carrying in some wheat for forage. The 8th were clearly surprised in this affair, and it was generally understood that at headquarters this would be no excuse, but never heard anything more come of it.<sup>13</sup>

Mosby, at this time, was absent wounded, and his force, called the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry, was commanded by Captain William H. Chapman.<sup>14</sup>

The 17th we remained in camp, but on the 18th all the sick men and unserviceable horses were sent back to Harper's Ferry and the general impression was that the whole army would go back tomorrow.

Barney Decker<sup>15</sup> was going back to camp sick and I sent "Ambrose" back by him. He was to sell him if possible, if not, to recruit him up.

In the afternoon the "General" was sounded, we all packed up and led out into line expecting to move, then went back to camp and our squadron (B and D) went on picket on the Front Royal pike just outside of Berryville. When the regiment was in line expecting to leave, it was noticed that a large amount of property was abandoned in camp, and Colonel Wells expressed his opinion on the subject.

Just before daylight we heard the rumbling of the column passing on the Winchester pike, and upon investigation found that the army was moving towards the front instead of back to the rear. I have read a great deal about a person's feelings the "night before the battle," but this I can say, that during an experience of about four years in active service, during which I participated in forty-three different engagements, I never knew "the night before the battle" whether we were to be engaged on the morrow or not. In this very case, I can think that it was generally supposed that we would go back to Harper's Ferry, instead of fighting one of the hardest battles of the war.

The column had been moving some time so that we had to move along at the side of the road, passing the Nineteenth Corps and some wagons.

The Third Cavalry Division had the advance and very fortunately secured the crossing of the Opequan, which was the enemy's line of defense. After we crossed the stream he heard firing at the front and soon began to pass wounded men.

We halted a short time and then moved up and took position on the right of the pike on some elevated ground where we could see the enemy moving some troops and wagons to the right. About noon some of the Sixth Corps took position in front of us and then we moved off to the left of the line, beyond the pike, passing on our way Generals Sheridan, Wright and Emory.

We passed through some sapling pine woods, down through a ravine, up by a church, and then Captain Ray's battalion was deployed as skirmishers mounted, while the rest of the regiment followed in line of battle. The face of the country here was rather open with some ravines, belts of timber, and small streams, with the usual number of rail fences.

We soon ran onto a line of Rebel infantry, fell back, and "prepared to fight on foot." Before advancing again General Chapman, who with his staff was examining the Rebel skirmish line with his field glasses, was struck in the side, in his sabre belt, by a spent ball, and slightly wounded. I was looking at him at the time, and noticing him double up, saw at once that he was hit, and I was quite sure that the shot came from a pine tree way to the left and on higher ground. Colonel Wells took command of the brigade, and dismounting the 22nd New York, ordered an advance.

We moved forward in line a short distance, when Company D was sent ahead as skirmishers, but the whole line soon closed up with us. We soon ran on the Rebel infantry, charged them on foot several times, and drove them three fourths of a mile. While we were advancing as fast as we could I had run up to the top of a little ridge, and, kneeling, fired my Spencer at some Rebels who were trying to cross the brook in the hollow below. When I went to reload, I found that the shell stuck in the breach of the carbine, and while I was prying it out with my knife, a Major Moore of the 8th New York Cavalry<sup>16</sup> came along, and telling me to go ahead, struck me with his riding whip.

Very soon after I had my carbine loaded, and turning toward him, I informed him that I did not belong to his command in any way as Colonel

Wells was in command of the brigade and Lieutenant Colonel Bennett of the skirmish line, and myself of the part of Company D there on the line, and furthermore, that if he did not go along and mind his own business, I would shoot him. He went off, but I heard from him again.

The line crossed the brook and went up the hill a short distance on the other side, but the enemy had quite a force opposite to us here which they rallied around a battle flag and held us in check. There was something of a rise of ground between us, so that we could not quite see each other, but could see the flags. We both, of course, fired as close to the ground as we could, but the knoll would carry the bullets over us unless we stood up, then we were liable to be hit. We made the flag a target, but it stood its ground well.

Dan Caraway of Company B<sup>17</sup> straightened up to see if he could get a good shot at some one and received a ball in his shoulder that whirled him around on his keel like a top and caused him to drop both himself and his carbine. After a time we were recalled to mount up, and as we slowly recrossed the brook and fell back up the ascent on the other side, the Rebel skirmish line followed up somewhat and wounded a good many of our men, especially about the time we were mounting up.

While I was going back, carrying my carbine and Caraway's, Major Moore came along and ordered two of his men to arrest me and take me to Colonel Wells. After going a little way he stopped us, and I was just looking for Lieutenant Colonel Bennett to state my case to him, when a rifle ball struck me in the same place that the man was hit in that wouldn't tell Mrs. Lincoln where he was hit. It doubled me up like a jack knife and I should have fallen down if John Woodard and James Abbott had not have helped me to the horses.<sup>18</sup>

I wanted to lay down, but they helped me on to James Wright's horse and took me to the field hospital, which was the little church before mentioned. It hurt me a great deal to ride on the horse and sweat rolled off me. On the way we passed George Blair who gave me some water.<sup>19</sup> We arrived at the hospital and they washed and dressed my wound, while outside they were amputating General McIntosh's leg.

They gave me some morphine and laid me in a pew for a short time and then Fred Holdridge carried me to the ambulance.<sup>20</sup> James Abbott

stayed with me all night and got me some supper and breakfast. The wound took away all my strength and made me feel like a little child. I wanted to have Jimmy stay by me and hold my hand, but he had to leave me in the morning.

During the afternoon the cavalry advanced across the fields and struck the Valley Turnpike south of Winchester and the ambulances followed.

From this time till the 9th of December I was absent from the regiment, and, of course, do not know much about its operations.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### With Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley

When William Wells assumed command of the Second Brigade, the cavalrymen were fighting at the extreme left flank of Sheridan's forces, in the open area southeast of Winchester along Abrams Creek. "Our Division was on the extreme left flank of our army and could see great portion of the fighting, the first time since I have been in the service that I have seen Infantry fight," Wells wrote home.<sup>1</sup> Both the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps suffered a repulse at midday and the fighting turned into a stalemate while Sheridan brought up the Eighth Corps and two cavalry divisions to flank Early's forces on the north.<sup>2</sup> Sergeant Eri Woodbury of Company E,

was struck by the close proximity of the serious and ridiculous. Early in the A.M. we passed a little glade where some soldiers were digging a grave for their fallen comrade who lay wrapt in his well worn soldier's blanket upon the soft grass nearby. My reflections were somewhat rudely broken in upon by the irreverent remark of one of the boys 'hallo! he's dead & Curtis has skeddaddled!' Curtis is a notorious coward, so much so that he has managed to slink out of every fight in the campaign. Sure enough the sight of this newly made grave had so excited his fears that he had left for parts unknown.<sup>3</sup>

George A. Curtis, a twenty-one year old trooper from Hartford, who had served since 1861 and who had reenlisted, deserted for good one month later at Cedar Creek.

With William Wells handling the brigade, Lieutenant Colonel John Bennett commanded the regiment throughout the remainder of the battle. "At about 10 A.M. this Regt. was deployed in a field as skirmishers," Sergeant Woodbury remembered,

That is we were in line—mounted—and about ten feet apart. Rebels were in a piece of fine woods some fifty rods or more in advance & perfectly concealed by the small growth about the edge of the lot. A long time they had annoyed us what at length Col.

Bennett ordered Sergt. Woodbury to take half a dozen men & charge into the woods upon them. In we went at the top of our horses speed. After going into the woods a few rods yelling like mad we halted. Rebs had fled, but after a few moments silence, whiz! whiz! came balls again from the enemy who in turn rushed in upon us. We left on the double quick. But we had drawn them out so as to learn something of their strength.<sup>4</sup>

Wilson's division pressed Early's right flank, but it was the Confederate's left flank that gave way under the pressure of the attack by the Eighth Corps and two divisions of cavalry that, in Sheridan's words, sent Early "whirling through Winchester." Wilson did not exploit Early's crumbling defense and, although his men gathered in Confederate prisoners, Wilson did not hinder Early's withdrawal. However, he pursued the enemy to Kernstown where the men camped for the night. The day-long engagement resulted in one Vermonter killed in action, Bertrand Campbell of Company C, a recruit who had enlisted the previous month, and a handful, including Sergeant Horace K. Ide, wounded.<sup>5</sup>

Jubal Early occupied the prepared positions at Fisher's Hill, blocking the main valley above Strasburg. He detached Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry division, then under William C. Wickham following Lee's wounding at Winchester, to occupy the Luray Valley and deny a flanking force rapid movement into the Confederate rear area. Sheridan sent Wilson and two brigades of Merritt's division under Alfred Torbert to drive Wickham up the Luray Valley. Then he was to cross westward through New Market Gap and land behind Early, thus cutting off his retreat after Sheridan had ousted him from his trenches. The First Vermont led Wilson's Division out through Newtown and along the Front Royal Pike until they bumped up against Wickham's defenses at the ford of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River at Front Royal. The Vermonters dismounted to feel out the position, but made no attempt to cross the river.<sup>6</sup>

George Chapman had not been seriously wounded, but he remained with the army until September 25th, when he left for a thirty day leave to be married in Indiana. He did not return until late in November when the campaign had closed, and William Wells, except for a few weeks in December and on a leave in January, commanded the Second Brigade, Third Cavalry Division until war's end.<sup>7</sup> John Bennett commanded the regiment until late October, when he left for Vermont to be mustered out, leaving

the regiment in the capable hands of newly-promoted Major William Cummings.<sup>8</sup>

Wells roused his brigade early on the 21st, saddling at 2 A.M. and crossing one branch of the Shenandoah River without opposition. Wells took his regiment and the First New Hampshire upriver for about a mile. "In silence the column wound its way along in the woods & dank grass, few feeling the mood to talk. Before light we were in line upon the bank, a little knoll keeping us from view. At length the head of the column began to advance to the ford when balls fell thick among us. About 8 A.M. we charged across & advanced passing Front Royal,"<sup>9</sup> Sergeant Woodbury remembered. Commissary Sergeant Charles Farr of Company F "was wounded. We went about 6 miles up the Luray Valley, our Squadron [companies F and H] went Dismounted, found the Rebs there in force. The Artillery came up just before Dark and opened on the Rebs. They replied. Clemons was Mortally Wounded with a piece of shell."<sup>10</sup> Edwin Clemons, a three-year veteran from Wells, was the only Vermonter killed during the day-long skirmishing.

The Confederates fell back that night and early on the morning of September 22nd as the cavalry advanced about ten miles into the Luray Valley. They discovered the enemy "in the glens & passes of the mountains," and Torbert deemed them too powerful to attack and the entire command retreated northward while the Vermonters picketed near Millwood throughout the night. On the 23rd the Vermonters fell back to within a few miles of Strasburg as Torbert completely failed in his mission to cut off Early's retreat. When Sheridan crushed the Confederate defenses that day at Fisher's Hill, Torbert's men were closer to Early's right flank than they were to his rear, thus allowing the Confederates to flee unimpeded.<sup>11</sup>

Sheridan once again ordered his cavalry forward on September 24th and Torbert did drive up the Luray Valley, crossing New Market Gap the next morning, and advancing to near Mount Crawford by the evening of the 25th. However, the game had flown and the tardy Federal cavalry found themselves outpaced by running Confederate infantry. Torbert's failure to bring Early to bay was matched by Sheridan's inability to inflict greater damage on the Confederates, and although the enemy had suffered two telling defeats, the Confederates had not suffered a decisive blow.<sup>12</sup>

Wells' brigade occupied Staunton on September 26th and the next day in concert with the 8th New York scouted twice from Staunton east to Waynesboro. During the first scout, Sergeant Woodbury recorded that they, "took few Johnnies, one, a young chap married last eve: his wife wept sorely at parting with him, while he appeared indifferent, such is the difference of man & woman."<sup>13</sup>

On September 28th the regiment skirmished near Waynesboro until evening when a portion of the unit received orders to destroy an iron railroad bridge. "Just as they were commencing a party of Rebs charged upon them. Soon they got their Battery in position & began shelling us. The Div. was soon in line & sustained the fire till the train moved out."<sup>14</sup> The bridge remained uninjured and the Vermonters fell back reaching Staunton at three that morning. For the next week the regiment picketed the area between Harrisonburg and Bridgewater, rarely seeing their enemies, but inflicting great losses on the neighboring farm animals. "How the pigs, sheep & poultry were slaughtered!!," Woodbury recorded on September 30th.<sup>15</sup>

On the same day George Armstrong Custer replaced James Harrison Wilson as commander of the Third Division. This change delighted the men in the regiment who had felt wronged when they were removed from Custer's Brigade during April. Wilson had never been a popular leader among the men. They disliked his dismounted tactics and felt that he had demonstrated his inability during the botched raid in the rear of Petersburg during June and July and, who also felt he had been responsible for the tepid pursuit at Winchester. With Custer once again, the regiment would fight mounted as they had during the first two years of the war. William Wells wrote home, "Brig Genl Custer nows commands us. The Div feel very much pleased at the change. Think you will hear better accounts of us now we have a gallant leader."<sup>16</sup>

The regiment spent the first week in October in camp on the north side of the North River near Mount Crawford. Sergeant Woodbury recorded that 105 recruits joined the regiment on October 1st, fourteen of which went to Company E. By the end of the first week of October, a total of 140 new men reached the regiment. The present for duty men numbered over four hundred at this time, however, nearly three hundred ten were scheduled to be mustered out in six weeks. Many of the three hundred were not on duty, being in the rear in hospitals or on detail. Wells wrote



home on October 4th that only 97 of the 300 were with the regiment, the remainder were elsewhere.<sup>17</sup>

On the morning of October 6th, Sheridan's men began to withdraw back down the Valley and the cavalry received orders to burn all barns, haystacks and forage as they marched northward to deny the Shenandoah Valley as a source of supplies to the Confederate Army. George G. Benedict wrote in 1888, "in this work of destruction, as it happened, the Vermont cavalry had little or no part, the duty falling to other troops."<sup>18</sup> Perhaps Benedict sought to deny the unpleasant truth, but Sergeant Farr made it clear: on October 6th, "our Battalion were Detailed to burn all the Forage in the left of the Valley."<sup>19</sup> Sergeant Woodbury recounted that he had doubts about the morality of their actions, still remembered in the Valley with bitterness as "The Burning." Woodbury wrote in his diary, "we are making a raid & burning all the forage in the valley. Co. E was out on the left flank driving in cattle & sheep & firing barns. I fired but one, & sorry enough to do that! Two of the boys were sent to fire one, when the lady of the house interposed seizing them frantically & trying to hold them & finally threw herself upon the flames, but was taken out by them."<sup>20</sup> Two days later on October 8th Woodbury recorded, "today I have the disagreeable task of firing some 7 or 8 barns. Is this incendiarism just?"<sup>21</sup> Disagreeable or not, the destruction of food and forage continued and succeeded in destroying the Valley's resources as a support for the Confederacy.

The Burning did not take place without opposition, for just as the Federals began their retrograde movement Thomas Rosser joined Early's army bringing his vaunted "Laurel Brigade" consisting of the 7th, 11th, and 12th Virginia Cavalry Regiments and 35th Virginia Cavalry Battalion. Hailed by some as the "Savior of the Valley," he took over Fitz Lee's division and moved against the cavalry that was burning barns and haystacks and driving off all farm animals. During the skirmishing on October 6th Thomas Ralph, a 24 year-old member of Company A, was mortally wounded, dying the next day.<sup>22</sup>

On the following day, the Vermonters were detailed as rear guard as Sheridan's men marched north along the Back Road, having to cross Big Stony Creek at Columbia Furnace to the west of New Market. The terrain from the south consisted of a long gradual descent to the ford followed by a sharp ascent as the road continued north, creating a natural choke point

that slowed the army while the Vermonters faced increasing pressure from Rosser's troops. Sergeant Farr recorded, "the Rebs Pitched into our rear opposite New Market and captured a part of our Cattle and Sheep and 8 Forges. We had a sharp fight, lost about 25 men. Our company were on the right Skirmishing when they charged. They cut us off but we went round through the Mountain. We had one man wounded."<sup>23</sup> Eri Woodbury remembered, "today while pursuing our devastating course, we were attacked by Gen. Rosser's Div. of Cav. I was sent out on the skirmish line with a squad of men. While there they flanked us upon the left, & our troops were forced into a confused retreat. I was at one time very near being captured."<sup>24</sup> The regiment repulsed two of Rosser's attacks, but at 2 P.M. the column halted and Bennett dismounted his men to hold back Rosser a third time.

The Confederates nearly overran the dismounted men because the horse holders had retreated. However, Adjutant Clarence Gates brought them back, and the Vermonters mounted and escaped. Wells deployed a battalion of the 8th New York and one from the 1st New Hampshire to reinforce Bennett. The Confederates drove Bennett from his position as the regiment retreated in confusion two miles to the main force of the brigade, losing Lieutenant Henry O. Wheeler and 34 men taken prisoner or missing. Edwin C. Jones, a 20 year-old recruit in Company C reportedly was sabred after he surrendered, dying the next day. Fellow company member Joseph N. Wright died of his wounds on Halloween in enemy hands, and two men, Henry F. Buchman and Joseph Champlain, both of Company E, were either murdered or died in Confederate hands without making it to prison.<sup>25</sup> Confederate cannoneer George M. Neese wrote that on October 7th he "saw a hundred barns burning to-day. Just at dusk this evening I saw Federal soldier lying on the field; from all appearances he was mortally wounded. He was piteously lamenting his condition and said, 'Oh, I want to see my mother; I wish I would have stayed at home.' I wished so too, but I did not let him hear me wish. He was from Vermont."<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Neese came upon young Edwin Jones, who had left home just a month previously.

On October 8th, the 18th Pennsylvania Cavalry took their place as rear guard, but met with worse success, being overrun by Rosser near Mount Olive. The Vermonters continued to burn barns and, later, picketed the brigade's position. One Vermonter was killed during the day, James Lowell, a recruit in Company I, who had left Greensboro just the month

before. Veteran Charles D. Harvey of Company L, died of his wounds on December 13th while a prisoner of war.<sup>27</sup> Sheridan had had enough of Rosser and that evening rode back to Custer and found him chaffing under orders to retreat from pressure. Sheridan sent for Torbert and ordered him to "start out at daylight, and whip the rebel cavalry or get whipped himself."<sup>28</sup>

Early on the following morning, the forces deployed near Tom's Brook, just south of the entrenchments at Fisher's Hill. Custer formed the right flank along the Back Road with about 2,500 men facing Rosser's 3,000, while Merritt with 2,500 men squared off against Lunsford Lomax's division of 2,000 men along the Valley Pike to the east. The fight took place in the open, the fences having long ago disappeared, while the Confederates formed up on the hill tops behind Tom's Brook. Sergeant Woodbury recalled,

at an early hour our Div. moved out to meet the enemy. This Brigade in rear. Met them upon a high hill. Their position seemed beyond attainment! 1st Brig. advanced, ours being drawn up in valley. Their shelling us was splendid, ours failed to strike them. 1st Div. on the pike at left advanced. We charged them, drove them & charged again & again drove them about 7 miles, capturing all six guns (6) & 10 wagons including their Hd. Qrs. wagon. Capt. Ray Co. G was mortally wounded: time would have expired on the 12th inst.<sup>29</sup>

Sergeant Farr added,

we advanced on the Rebs, we had a hard fight and we charged them about 6 miles and captured 6 Pieces of artillery, all their Ambulances and wagon train and Cattle and Sheep. The 1st Division advanced on the Pike and captured 5 Pieces of Artillery. We had 2 men killed, Captain Ray [and Carlos Hodgdon of Company L]. We captured about 95 prisoners. Our Regiment made one of the most Splendid charges they ever made.<sup>30</sup>

John Bennett formed his command in the rear of the 8th New York on the left of the Back Road. Before he had finished deploying his men, Wells ordered him to the right of the road to support the division artillery, where the Vermonters remained under fire for almost an hour. Finally, the regi-

ment was ordered around to the left of the artillery and straight uphill towards the enemy. Bennett charged with Major Andrew Grover's Third Battalion in the advance. Grover's men faced stout resistance and a counterattack, so Bennett maneuvered the First and Second Battalions under Captain William Cummings to Grover's support. Grover's men partially broke in the face of the enemy. The three battalions fought the Confederates for a half hour at the top of this hill, sometimes fighting was hand to hand.

Again we advanced to the edge of the woods, and those who had carbines used them effectively. Col. Wells, commanding the brigade, comes up at this juncture, and men keep coming up one by one. In a few moments Custer is there himself, and his flag is seen right where the bullets are flying thickest. Our colors, too, are there, the State colors borne by Sergt. Frost, Co. A., the national, Sergt. James Wright, Co. D. Braver men than these are not found. Men kept coming up and rallying around the colors. Soon the word 'forward' was given and on we rushed again, and with such impetuosity, that the rebel masses were broken and fled in the utmost confusion. Our boys were so enthusiastic that they could not be kept together, but went in, every man for himself. The result was the capture of six pieces of artillery, all the rebels had, and all their train.

Vermont claims the honor of capturing three of these pieces, and of the train, four or five ambulances, and three wagons, two of which belonged to the headquarters of the rebel General Wickham.<sup>31</sup> We also captured horses and mules, and several prisoners, among the latter three commissioned officers.

Among those particularly active in capturing the artillery and train we might mention Adj. Gates, Sergt. H. E. Smith, Wm Joyce, G. B. Mattoon, Warren R. Spaulding, of Co. F, and Ed. Stone of Co. E.<sup>32</sup> Stone took one gun unaided, although there were with the gun a Sergt. and three cannoniers besides the drivers. Stone whacked the drivers over the head with his saber and compelled them to turn about and drive to the rear.

Too much praise cannot be awarded those brave boys who so gallantly bore our colors at our front, right into the very ranks of the rebels. Jimmy Wright of Ryegate, carried the national colors. At one time he found himself face to face with a rebel, and demanded him to surrender. Jimmy had no arms in his hands, but

watching his opportunity he gave the Johnny a severe thrust in the breast with the end of his flag staff, which came near knocking him from his horse. He at the same time seized the rebel's carbine and turned it just in time to save his life. The ball inflicted a slight wound in his side. Rebel was satisfied to leave Jimmy with the colors, and rode away. The bravery of Sergts. Haswell and Cook of Co. G. should not be unnoticed. At the critical time in the woods, they stood alone, right out in the open field and, with sabers drawn, did their utmost to urge the men to follow them in another charge.<sup>33</sup>

John Bennett had his horse shot out from under him and Major Andrew Grover commanded the regiment in the final assault. The regiment became divided, one part under Adjutant Gates followed the running Confederates ten miles to Columbia Furnace, and another part driving the enemy towards New Market. The regiment reunited that night near Strasburg having captured two guns. William Wells wrote he was, "very much worn out have not had anything to eat since yestarday morning—had a very hard Cavalry fight near this place, we whiped the enemy badly. My Brig captured six (6) Guns Artillery about 30 Wagons & Ambulances & 100 prisoners, the best thing it has done this year."<sup>34</sup> The regiment accounted for two of the guns, three ambulances, two army wagons, and about twenty-five prisoners.<sup>35</sup>

The Battle of Tom's Brook demoralized the Confederate cavalry, lowering them even in the estimation of Jubal Early, who never was a great supporter of the mounted arm. Rosser's Brigade had taken the laurel leaf for a badge, hence their name—"The Laurel Brigade." When Rosser met Early after his flight from the battlefield, Early supposedly drawled, "I say, Rosser your brigade had better take the grape leaf for a badge; the laurel is not a running vine."<sup>36</sup>

During the following week, Sheridan retired behind Cedar Creek to the north of Strasburg and Custer's Division picketed the extreme right of the position along the Back Road, going into position on October 11th. Eri Woodbury was detailed for picket duty on the 12th, but he managed to capture three or four hens while out foraging. Woodbury, "paid the owner 'don't take my hens, I'm a poor man.' But we must have rations. At the same time others drove off his cows. It does seem hard."<sup>37</sup> An 1863 graduate of Dartmouth College, Woodbury had been superintendent of

Derby Academy up on the Canadian border until December 1863. He rapidly became a veteran, although he never lost his compassion for the civilians he encountered in Virginia.

Phil Sheridan and the leadership of the Army of the Shenandoah discounted the potential threat that Jubal Early's command posed, even after a bloody skirmish at Hupp's Hill just north of Strasburg on October 13th and the capture of Major George Marcy and a squadron of the 1st Connecticut Cavalry along Cedar Creek on the 16th. These skirmishes were more notable to the men of the 1st Vermont because the "Old Boys" of the regiment were sent to the rear to avoid casualties prior to being ordered to Vermont for muster out. Sergeant Charles Farr, himself an "Old Boy," recorded with some satisfaction that on the 14th, "they expected a fight and the old boys were sent to the Rear. They did not have a fight."<sup>38</sup> The "Old Boys" did not receive orders for home until October 22nd, but they did not fight in the Battle of Cedar Creek on the 19th, since they were led to the rear as soon as firing commenced. Even though the majority of officers were to be mustered out in November, they served in the front lines until ordered home, and thus did fight at Cedar Creek.

Jubal Early conducted one of the most successful surprise attacks in American history, launching his outnumbered army on the unsuspecting Federals before dawn on October 19th, thus routing the Eighth Corps from its camps, defeating and forcing the Nineteenth Corps to retreat, and driving the Sixth Corps from its camps. The Confederate infantry and Jubal Early drove the Union forces until they expended their momentum. The Sixth Corps effectively traded space for time, anchored by the hard-fighting Vermont Brigade of Getty's Second Division. In one of its most notable combats, they blunted Early's infantry, giving the Army of the Shenandoah time to organize a defense four miles from where the fighting had begun. Likewise, this action gave Sheridan, just back from a conference in Washington, the opportunity to loosen a counterattack that swept Early's forces from the battlefield. In the course of the day's fighting, Wells's Brigade, protecting the right flank, was the only Federal unit that did not retreat in the face of Confederate attacks. However, the cavalry on the right had only to face the inept attacks of Rosser's demoralized troopers, not the desperate assaults of Confederate infantry. Wells's men did have to move back from time to time to maintain their alignment on the right flank of the Sixth Corps.<sup>39</sup>

Rosser crossed Cedar Creek at about 4 A.M. and engaged Wells' pickets. Wells responded by sending the Vermonters to reinforce the pickets and they contained Rosser's attacks. Custer, seeing that the Confederate cavalry posed no real threat, left Wells in charge of the four-mile long right flank. Wells held with just four regiments, the Vermonters, the 9th New York (from Merritt's First Division), the 3rd New Jersey (from the Third Brigade, Third Division), and Wells's 22nd New York Cavalry, while Custer marched to the sound of the main fighting with the rest of the Third Division.<sup>40</sup>

John Bennett reported,

on the morning of the 19th of October the command was aroused by an attack on the right of the picket lines, which was held by our Division. It was soon ascertained that our line had been forced, and a lodgement effected by the enemy on the north bank of Cedar Creek. I was ordered to 'move out' with my regiment, select and occupy a position covering camp, and also feel the lines of the enemy. The latter was promptly and successfully accomplished by the 1st battalion, under Capt. Cummings. I was then ordered to return to camp, on my arrival was almost immediately directed to reoccupy the position, but ere this could be executed, it was superseded by another to withdraw promptly, and join the Division then moving in the direction of the infantry lines, whose heavy firing was now heard. No sooner had I joined the column, than I was directed to move again to the extreme right, and ascertain if any flanking column of the enemy was moving in that direction.

A short distance brought me in sight of a strong column, which fact I promptly reported, and selecting a position so as to check their advance, I awaited the attack. Having received orders from Col. Wells to fall back and keep connection with the infantry, I slowly withdrew; the enemy followed, skirmishing sharply. After retiring about one mile, information was received that the infantry were making strenuous efforts to check the further advance of the enemy. I therefore halted, and by severe skirmishing succeeded in holding my lines, for more than two hours. Gen. Custer now returning from the left, with the 1st Brigade and battery, ordered a charge, in which we drove the enemy and regained my former position. This we held until about 4 p. m., when the

whole division was moved rapidly to the left and front, dividing the enemy's infantry from his cavalry; and while the 1st Brigade engaged his cavalry, Gen. Custer, taking my regiment, moved rapidly down across the battlefield, where the 6th Corps in the morning most gallantly, but vainly, endeavored to check the tide of battle, which was sweeping back the broken and scattered 8th and 19th Corps. Here mingled lay the dead and wounded of both armies and as our men gazed upon the naked forms of their dead and wounded comrades,—the former entirely, the latter partially stripped by our inhuman foe,—the deep murmurs that ran along the ranks foreshadowed the impetuosity of the coming charge.

At this juncture the lines of both armies were a short distance to the left and front, in full view, and our infantry driving the enemy in fine style. All these circumstances combined awakened an enthusiasm and determination needing only the guiding hand to render terrible. At this time the lines of the enemy rested along our old breastworks, on the north bank of Cedar Creek. The order given by Gen. Custer was to charge the breastworks, swing to the left, and secure what we could. Before this could be executed, so rapid was the movement of the enemy to the rear, nearly all were over the creek; only a few were secured.

Down a narrow winding footpath, which led through the thick wood covering the bluff on this bank of the creek, we dashed across the creek, skirmishing until the advance reached a heavy stone wall, about sixty (60) rods from the crossing; here it was halted until the entire regiment could arrive. Just as I had completed the re-forming of the regiment, Gen. Custer came up with the 5th New York Cavalry, which formed upon my left. Not a moment was to be lost; ten thousand veteran infantry, within one-fourth of a mile, and near a grove of heavy timber, although broken, might in a moment's time prepare to successfully resist a much heavier force. With the order 'attention,' I leaped my horse over the stones, where the wall had been thrown down, and ordered the regiment 'forward'. Headed by the color bearer, with shouts, the presage of victory, they obeyed. For a moment the air seemed freightened with the missiles of death, but a moment only,—confused and terrified, the enemy threw down their arms, and trampled upon each other in their frantic attempts to escape. My men rushed upon them as though they were the appointed avengers of their comrades slain. Considering our numbers, the slaughter was



fearful. The enemy, dividing to the right and left, let my command through his centre on to his artillery and trains. Some we captured in good order with cannoniers in their places, drivers on their horses, others entangled, upset and abandoned, and again ambulances with their loads of wounded, horses with their riders, cannoniers with pieces, as if hurled together by some all powerful agency, lay a mass of ruins."<sup>41</sup>

In 1902 John Bennett, then a quite successful lawyer in Chicago, wrote an extended account of the regiment's success in the waning hours of the battle, in which the 1st Vermont Cavalry captured more artillery and equipment in a single charge than any other regiment in the United States Army up to World War One. Perhaps they captured more artillery than any American regiment ever captured in a single charge.

"...We followed the enemy, skirmishing, forded the creek, and crossed the low ground to the stone wall, and halted, ordering the command to re-form, count off, load both revolvers and carbines (my regiment was armed with sabres, revolvers, and carbines), and throw down a piece of the stone wall.

I rode to the summit of a knob, or high point of land, that rose at the east, from which, sitting upon my horse, I had a view of the plain to the south. I dispatched a courier in haste for General Custer. In a few moments he arrived, and I pointed to the plain at the south, covered by thousands of the enemy's infantry, broken and disorganized, and called his attention to the efforts of the officers to re-form their troops and bring order out of confusion. Then I remarked to the General, 'If I am to charge them it must be done at once, for if they reform they will empty every saddle before I can reach them.' The General rose in his stirrups, gave one long, lingering look over the field, and replied, 'That is so. When you go, throw in every man you have, and I will take care of you.' This was the only order given. A statement of the number of the enemy in sight on that tableland to the south at that moment, would have no value other than an estimate from a hasty glance, but I think it safe to say there was not less than 5000 infantry. My memory is that the enemy were still crossing the creek at the east of us. I distinctly recall the fact of my extreme anxiety to see some support approaching, notwithstanding my confidence in the promptness of General Custer. Following the

arrival of General Custer, and before we moved to the charge, a detachment of the 5th New York cavalry under the command of a major, joined my command. No other troops of the Union army were south of the creek when we moved to the charge, nor did I see or hear any until after the fighting south of the creek was over.

Who can describe a charge of cavalry—with the scene so rapidly changing; one might write a lifetime without completing a description. Upon receiving the General's reply I hastened to the head of my regiment, passed through the gap made in the wall, and ordered the whole command forward (the detachment of the 5th New York included). We moved up the ascent slowly, until all the command had passed through the opening in the wall and closed up and formed in proper order. There were four of us riding abreast at the head of the command, ten to twenty feet in advance. As we four came into view, and before much of the command had reached the point where they could be seen, the enemy commenced firing (a most fortunate event). Their line was not only directly in my front, but reached many rods both to the right and left, and the fire from every part was concentrated upon our advance. Seldom have I heard the air more heavily freighted with lead than at that moment. Of the four of us riding abreast, two certainly went down.<sup>42</sup> I cannot recall what became of the third. I am under the impression that he fell; but I was alone. It was apparently that the success of the charge depended upon the force of the blow. Then I ordered the charge, and my men, with set faces, leaned forward low on their horses, and putting them to their utmost speed, rushed upon the enemy (a body sufficiently numerous to have devoured all my men, had they been good beef). The 5th New York swung out and struck the enemy at my left, while I led my regiment straight to the front, thus keeping the advance. The enemy when we struck them were a dense body, covering several acres, and the broken and disorganized rushed upon those in better order, so that all were thrown into confusion. My men with carbines, lying along the side of their horses' necks, fired point blank upon this mass. When the seven shots were gone carbines were slung and revolvers drawn. At one point some of the enemy fell and others fell over them, until the ground for the distance of nearly half an acre was covered with a struggling mass of fallen men. We swung just to left of this fallen body, and smashed our way right through the main force of the enemy, who

slowly gave way, and then rushed to the right and left. Here we overtook the first gun. After passing through the main body of the enemy we came on to one or more batteries of artillery, some standing ready to move, with the drivers on the horses, the cannoniers on the ammunition chests, and the officers in their places, some of whom surrendered in the face of empty revolvers. How much time was consumed in reaching this point I am unable to state, but twilight was fading and darkness was falling. South of the batteries taken, and near the point where the ground begins to descend to the south, west of the bank, on the west side of the pike, stood a number of ambulances, ammunition wagons, and more artillery, all of which started with a rush for the pike, and many of which dashed over the west bank, down from four to six feet, almost perpendicular. The wagons, ambulances, with their wounded, and artillery, in some instances, turned over and fell upon the horses. Here was a confusion worse confounded. Screams, groans, oaths, and prayers from men, and groans from animals, filled the air. The pike for several rods was covered with this material, and the wounded, dead, and dying men and animals. No language can convey any adequate idea of what could be seen, even in the dim light of approaching darkness. All serious resistance ceased at this point, and my memory is that very few shots were fired thereafter, and those mostly in the air as some of the enemy's stragglers were discovered approaching the pike at or west of Strasburg and our men called upon them to surrender. I recall no instance after this in which resistance was offered. A few of my men were preparing to move to the rear with the captured artillery; another part were aiding those who were struggling on the pike, and the remainder pushed on rapidly south along the pike. As a heavy force of the enemy had moved to the west as we came through there, with two or three men I rode rapidly a short distance in that direction, fearing that they might be forming in my rear. Finding no force near, I hastened back, and as I reached the pike I saw a small force of Union cavalry coming from the north. These were the first Union troops that I saw south of the creek, other than my own command. A little in advance of these troops I saw and spoke to Colonel Wells (afterwards General), who had no force with him, who expressed anxiety that I secure what I had captured. I then hastened south on the pike, observing one or more of my men at each and every gun I passed, and did

not halt until I had reached the bridge between Strasburg and Fisher's Hill. The bridge was blocked by two wagons, one on the northwest side, with the north fore wheel just outside the north railing, or edge of the bridge, and the other in the same condition on the south side, leaving a space between the wagons only just sufficient to let a horse pass between. I do not remember that any of the planking was removed. My impression is that I rode to the further edge of the bridge and listened for the sound of moving wagons or artillery beyond, and heard none. Here I gathered and put in order a small detachment of my men, and, leaving them, returned to a point half a mile or more north of Strasburg, to the rear of the train of wagons, ambulances, artillery, etc., which from said bridge to that point filled the pike in one unbroken line. Here I was compelled to send captured ambulances with their wounded, and wagons without charge of drivers, accompanied by small parties of prisoners, unguarded, to the rear. Who picked up these wagons and ambulances, and turned them in, I do not know. This work was continued, and at a few moments after twelve, midnight, I reached the north bank of Cedar Creek, and lay down with a few of my men, surrounded with captured property, after being in the saddle fully 22 consecutive hours. Now, you must bear in mind that this statement is made almost in toto from my memory.

The next day, or the day following, at the request of General Custer, and with him and several of my officers, we met officers from the other commands at headquarters of General Sheridan. There and then the question was decided as to what credit should be given to each command for the property captured. There was no doubt expressed after my statement, nor was there any more contention. The credit was given to the 1st Vermont and 5th New York cavalry, who alone participated in the charge. The division between my regiment and the 5th New York I made: I took just a majority of the guns, the three battle flags, and the prominent officers. The balance of the list found upon my receipt, according to my memory, was a squad of prisoners we had been guarding, and a lot of odds and ends that had not been previously delivered. Officers criticised my division, saying I had done an injustice to my own regiment. I had always supposed that the Major of the 5th New York took a receipt for the balance of the guns, and any

other property he desired, and I am unable to disabuse my mind of that impression.

I recall no effort on my part to secure a full list of the property captured, or the number of prisoners, and have them incorporated in my receipt. The truth is, there was too much of it. It was too common—but the valuable and important things I asked and received a receipt for. My memory is that all the property that was south of the creek when the charge was made and was captured came into the possession and under the full control of some portion of my command first; as to prisoners, other commands may have captured more or less, as I left plenty of the enemy in my rear to my right and left...

After the battle of Tom's Brook, October 9, 1864, a certain regiment contested my claim to one of the guns my regiment captured. The contest was settled in my favor. After it was settled I gave orders to my regiment that thereafter whenever any man captured any artillery he must stay with it until he was relieved by proper orders. This was the reason my men stayed by each gun captured on this occasion."<sup>43</sup>

This is the receipt given to Lieutenant Colonel Bennett:

Head Quarters, 2d Brig., 3rd Cav. Div., Mid. Military Div.  
October 22, 1864

Received of 1st Vermont Cavalry, Lieut. Colonel Bennett commanding, the following amount of property, and number of prisoners, captured on the 19th inst., at the Battle of Cedar Creek:

161 prisoners, among was one General officer.

One (1) Colonel. One (1) Lieut. Colonel.

Three (3) Battle Flags.

Twenty-three (23) pieces of Artillery.

Fourteen (14) Caissons.

Seventeen (17) Army Wagons.

Six (6) Spring Wagons and Ambulances.

Eighty-three (83) sets Artillery Harness.

Seventy-five (75) sets Wagon Harness.

Ninety-eight (98) Horses.

Sixty-nine (69) Mules.

(Sgd) G.H. ROGERS  
Lieut. and Provost Marshal  
2d Brig. 3rd Cav. Div.

Approved  
(Signed) C.M. LEE  
Provost Marshall, 3rd Cav. Div.<sup>44</sup>

Sergeant Eri Woodbury, just ten months in the army, had a very good day at Cedar Creek.

Hurrah!! Upon Sheridan's return away flew Rebs, Custar's Cavalry in hot pursuit. Drove them across Cedar Creek & beyond Fisher's Hill & Strasburg. A little hill on left of road at entrance of Fisher's Hill was covered with fugitive Infantry. I charged in alone, cut off four & captured a battle flag belonging to 12 N.C. Regt. Inftry. Carried it to Custar's Hd. Qrs. It is said that anyone taking a battle flag can have 20 days furlough & \$30 bounty. Col. Wells wished to take it to his Brig. Hd. Qrs. & show it.<sup>45</sup>

Woodbury later said that he noticed that one of the four men he captured carried his "rifle" in an awkward position, trailing behind him. "Give up that flag!," Woodbury demanded and the Confederate reluctantly gave up the colors.<sup>46</sup> Not only did Woodbury get his furlough, but he also received the Medal of Honor., After returning to the regiment from home, he was promoted to second lieutenant.

Private James Sweeney of Company A also captured a battle flag, but Corporal Frederick A. Lyon, also of Company A, rounded up a bigger prize, the mortally-wounded Major General Stephen D. Ramseur. Lyon later wrote his account of the capture,

It was at the battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864. On account of being surprised the left of our line fell back during the day nearly four miles. About four or five o'clock in the afternoon General Merritt's Division of cavalry charged that branch of the rebel force on the 'Dirt Road' which ran parallel to the Pike nearly four miles distant, and we saw nothing more of them during the engagement. It was nearly night when General Custer's Division was ordered forward. Upon reaching Cedar Creek we found that

the enemy had all crossed the stream. Sergeant Haskell,<sup>47</sup> of Company H, of my regiment, and myself were the first to cross at some distance above the bridge, but we were not long without company, the whole command coming in a body. The ground was level for some distance after leaving the creek and many prisoners were taken and sent to the rear under their own escort. At the top of a sharp hill we halted for a moment and made some pretense of forming a line. This delay, however, was of short duration. It was getting so dark now that we could not distinguish our own men. Knowing that General Merritt had routed the enemy's entire cavalry force, and as we had no infantry on that side of Cedar Creek, it was obvious that every dismounted man we met belonged to General Early's command.

We had only charged a short distance around the curve in the pike when we came upon the whole retreating army, infantry, artillery, ambulance, baggage wagons, etc. The charge as a command was at an end. It was every man for himself, and the longest pale knocked off the largest persimmons. All was excitement. The fun for us at least was unlimited. I never saw such a stampede. Whole companies surrendered to half a dozen mounted men. Some of us galloped forward seeking diversion nearer the front. The only way was to call your horse out on one side of the pike, ride past half a dozen wagons, or pieces of artillery, command the leading rider to halt, shooting down a horse if necessary to force obedience, and order all to the rear.

I was getting well to the front of the retreating column. Even a rebel bugler who had been near me continually sounding the charge was ordered to the rear. It was dark; I began to feel as if I was away from home, among a strange people. Jumping my horse upon a bank to the right, I rode past a number of wagons, and halted an ambulance that was about to cross the bridge at Strasburg. A voice from out the darkness replied: 'General Ramseur is inside and he ordered us to 'move on.'

Now I had seen considerable of generals, but to order one to 'halt,' and a major general at that, after he had given the order to 'move on,' was considerably out of my line. It was reversing things. I fortunately maintained my presence of mind and a second time requested their delay, informing them that I was a member in good standing of the Federal Army. 'What'—from the ambulance—'are you a Yank?' I replied that I belonged to the First

Cavalry, and my questioner, a major on General Ramseur's staff, appreciated the situation at once.

The conference was brief and ended in the ambulance turning around and starting back towards Cedar Creek and Winchester. On the return I met General William Wells, commanding our brigade, who advised me to take my prisoners to General Custer's headquarters. The ambulance contained the general, a major, driver and a battle-flag. Generals Custer and Ramseur knew each other well, having been classmates at West Point.<sup>48</sup>

Like Woodbury and Sweeney, Fred Lyon also received a Medal of Honor, not for having captured Ramseur, but because the ambulance contained a battleflag. James Sweeney ended up with Ramseur's headquarters flag, and he, Lyon, and Woodbury arrived in Washington on October 23rd to display their trophies and receive their medals.<sup>49</sup>

The success of his former regiment propelled William Wells to the star he greatly desired. On the 21st of October, Wells wrote,

Genl Custer started for Washington today with colors captured by the Cav Corps, eight in number. I shall be in command of the Division until he returns which will be within a week, he also told me that he should recommend me to the Secretary of War for a promotion to Brig General and that he should urge the thing strongly, that I had earned the star if anyone had. I enclose list of property captured by 1st Vt Cav commd by Lt Col Bennett of My Brig—it is the biggest thing of the War.<sup>50</sup>

The "Old Boys"—who had been kept in the rear at Cedar Creek—and those officers who agreed to be mustered out left for Vermont on October 22, but found before they could leave the army for good on November 18th they had to serve along the Canadian border in the wake of the Confederate raid on St. Albans. Bennett Young and a group of Confederate soldiers living in Canada raided the village from their base in Montreal. The returning veterans discovered that after the Rebels robbed the local banks and shot up the town, killing one civilian, that three former 1st Vermont Cavalry officers organized and led a pursuit of the raiders. George P. Conger, who had resigned as captain of Company B back on September 12, 1862, organized the immediate pursuit with a handful of men. Within minutes forty men under former captain John W. Newton and first



lieutenant F. Stewart Stranahan of Company L immediately followed. (Newton resigned on February 27, 1864 and Stranahan August 28, 1864.) Conger's men succeeded in capturing a few of the raiders, but turned them over to the Canadian authorities, who released them after recognizing them as belligerents. Paranoia swept Vermont in the wake of the raid and both militia and volunteers stood ready to march to the borders to protect the state from further incursions allowed by the Canadians.<sup>51</sup>

In the Shenandoah Valley the war was a little more clear cut, even though the activities of Mosby and other guerrillas did inflict some damage in the rear areas of the Army of the Shenandoah. Mosby executed three men (and tried to kill four more who lived) on November 6th in retaliation for the execution of seven of his men, but none of the 1st Vermont Cavalry were among the number. Some reports indicated that a Sergeant Dodge of the Vermont Cavalry had been hanged, but no such sergeant served in the regiment, and the regiment lost no men killed or missing between the action at Tom's Brook on October 9th and the skirmish along the Back Road on November 11th.<sup>52</sup>

Recruits continued to arrive from Vermont and on October 31st the regiment counted 544 men present for duty, even with nearly 300 men back home waiting to be mustered out. Nearly 150 of the men present for duty served outside the regiment. Regimental commander Major William Cummings further reported that with the absence of the old men and the officers that he mustered four hundred men for duty under just three officers during the last week in October. Wells sent a list of officers he wanted commissioned as quickly as possible to Adjutant General Peter T. Washburn. Washburn promised to have the men commissioned, but informed Wells that the new men could not get commissions until the veteran officers left the service on November 18th, thus freeing up the slots. Most of the new officers were trusted sergeants, including Horace K. Ide and Eri Woodbury, but their paperwork could not come through until December. So, for six weeks Cummings ran the regiment with the assistance of Captain Alexander B. Chandler and Second Lieutenant Harris B. Mitchell.<sup>53</sup>

Wells and Cummings faced the problem of running a regiment made up primarily of recruits using non-commissioned officers. Cummings had to operate against Confederate cavalry early in November with "some two hundred and fifty (250) of its members [being] recruits just from the State,

and had never seen a day's drill." But, Cummings assured the Adjutant General, that "the regiment never fought better."<sup>54</sup> Added to one hundred fifty recruits arriving in September and October, the problem became even of larger consequence, but the veterans rose to the fore and displayed their leadership and skills that they had accumulated since 1861.

Although Jubal Early's infantry and artillery were of little consequence, the Confederate cavalry still proved it could manage a reconnaissance in force. On November 10th, the Vermonters moved back to Kernstown with Sheridan's entire army, where they picketed the three-mile line along Middle Road from Newtown to Faucet's Gap. At about noon the following day, the posts were attacked by Confederate cavalry, who forced the Vermonters back along the Middle Road. Wells sent out the brigade as support and a heavy skirmish lasted until dark, when the Confederates pulled back, losing several prisoners when the Vermonters regained their outpost line. The skirmish cost the life of Michael Donovan, a 22 year-old Rutland recruit in Company H, who had joined the army in July.<sup>55</sup> Three others were wounded.

The fighting on November 11th was followed by an attempt by Rosser's cavalry to force the position the next day at dawn. The Vermonters held the picket line this time, and when the remainder of the division arrived at 11 A.M. Wells's Brigade attacked Rosser and pushed him back two miles. "We had quite a Cavalry fight on the 11th and 12th," Wells wrote home. "The latter day my brigade fought a Division of Rebel cavalry, and drove them about two miles. We were not supported and were obliged to fall back as we were flanked. The Brigade has not done better fighting this season than on the 12th."<sup>56</sup> The regiment lost Paul Dumas of Company L killed and Andrew Miller of Company B died of his wounds on November 15th. Three men from Company B disappeared, Patrick Cole, John Jake, and Walter Thompson, but whether they were killed, died in captivity, or headed to Canada has never been settled. All were recent recruits who might have enlisted for the bounties.<sup>57</sup> About a dozen Vermonters were wounded on the 12th.

On November 19th, the Cavalry Corps advanced to Mount Jackson, scene of the regiment's first fight on April 16, 1862, just north of New Market, but found the Confederates in force at Rude's Hill and withdrew, with the Vermonters covering the rear. The Confederates attacked the rear guard, wounding two men and capturing one. The regiment returned to

camp on November 23rd and remained there until December 7th when the division marched to Moorefield, West Virginia to try to intercept Rosser's foray into that state. Custer rode fifty miles in sixteen hours, but Rosser had escaped and the division returned to camp on December 11th. It was there that Horace K. Ide, just back from Vermont and recovered from his wound, rejoined the command.<sup>58</sup>

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### Sergeant Ide's Recuperation

September 20th, 1864. Found that we are near Kernstown. Abbott got me some breakfast, put my things in the ambulance, and we were carried to Winchester and put into a large church. Barney Stone<sup>1</sup> and I laid together on the hay under a window near the north west corner. Kept the wound well wet. A surgeon came up and examined it and said there was no bullet in there.

Wednesday 21st. Dr. Nims came to attend to us.<sup>2</sup> Captain Cummings and Lieutenant Caldwell<sup>3</sup> came in a short time. I wrote a letter home.

22d. Had to take morphine, wound was very painful. Got a paper giving an account of the battle.

23d. I felt a little better. Some of the wounded sent to Harper's Ferry and some brought in from the front.

Sept. 24th. Laid in hospital all day.

25th. A lot of wounded were sent to Harper's Ferry. Dr. Nims said I could go if I wished, so I did. Rode in an army wagon, went by way of Bunker Hill, Smithsburg &c. Got into Sandy Hook about 10 P. M. Very tired and in a great deal of pain. Were put in the field hospital and had our wounds dressed.

26th. About 11 AM were carried down to Sandy Hook and laid on a bank as the cars were all full, but they got room for me in one of them without any straw. Started about 2 PM and arrived at Baltimore at 11. Lost part of the train and had to go back for it. After waiting an hour or two, they brought a stretcher, took me out and laid me on the side walk. Waited there an hour while a little boy brought me some bread, meat and water. Then they took me inside and finally sent me over to the Camden Street Hospital. Four men carried me on a stretcher, raised me up to the 3rd story on a dumb waiter and put me to bed.

27th. Had my wound dressed. The surgeon examined it and said there was something in there. Telegraphed to Father. In a good deal of pain at night. I had a magazine to read.

28th. Sent out for some apples and stationary and wrote to Reed and Corliss. The nurse gave me some morphine in the evening.

29th. I sent out and got 30 cents worth of apples. The surgeon probed my wound, but could not follow any passage.

30th. Pretty comfortable all day, but had pain the first part of the night. Did not get any morphine, so could not sleep much.

October 1st. The surgeon ordered sleeping powders for me. Felt quite well all day. Got a new book to read. The nurses were cleaning up for Sunday morning inspection.

2d. Sunday morning inspection by Dr. Bliss. I read the life of General Taylor. Divine service and singing downstairs.

3d. Laid in bed nearly all day.

4th. Surgeon did not come over. I got a pair of socks.

5th. I wrote a letter home. Applied for a furlough, but the surgeon said I could not have one as I had one within a year. I bought a pipe and some tobacco.

6th. I went down to the library and got some books. Music in the evening overhead. Sent out for some honey; could not find any.

7th. Laid in bed nearly all day and read Count Robert of Paris.

8th. About 60 convalescents were sent to Fort Hill preparatory to going to their regiments. Among them George and Moses our two nurses.

9th. Sent down for my clothes, put them on and went down to the library. Pennsylvania men sent to Philadelphia, among them Stuffey, who got better very fast.

10th. Went out into the city with one of the nurses. Bought me a cane, jelly and some other things. Went to the Express Office, but could not find any box.

11th. Might have had a pass if I had been a little sooner. Ohio and Pennsylvania soldiers voted today. Had a talk with a sergeant from the Second Corps who was wounded at Cold Harbor. Told me all about Hancock's great charge at Spotsylvania.

October 12th. Got a letter from home saying Father had started to come to me. In the evening went out in the other room and had quite a talk. While out there Father came, so I heard from home. He stayed all night.

October 13th. Father went out for his breakfast and after doctor came we went to Dr. Bliss to apply for a furlough, but he said my name was down to go to Vermont. Went to the Express Office and then to the Washington Monument. Number —— feet high. We went to the top and then came back. After dinner got a pass and went out round the depot. Saw a long funeral procession. He stayed with me all night.

October 14th. Father came in and then went to the depot. After a while we got ready, got into the ambulances and started for New York. Found Father at the depot and he went with me. Arrived in New York City about 7 P. M. and stayed over night in the Transient Hospital at Castle Garden.

October 16th. After dinner got a pass till half past one. Went up to 685 Broadway, found no one there and got back at half past two. At four got into the same ambulance, rode to the depot, had some baked beans, got into the cars and just then Father, Mr. Pierce George and Henry Tyson came along. Saw them about two minutes. Went to Springfield and stayed in the Soldiers' Rest. Had coffee and bread and butter for supper and breakfast.

October 17th. Got shaved in Springfield and started north at 8 A. M., arrived at Brattleboro at 11 A. M. Found Ben at the depot, went up to camp with him, took dinner with him. Went to Steward Green, was put in Ward L, Bed 20 and then went down town. We made some purchases and

then we took a coach for camp. Took supper with him and then went over to the barracks and found my bundle. Had my wound dressed before dark.

October 18th. Was out when the surgeon came round. Stayed all the afternoon with Ben. Took supper with him. Went to a Lyceum reception room.

October 19th. Dr. Hanley examined my wound. In the evening played Bluff with Ben Stewart, Warren and Dereen for chestnuts till they had to get ready and go to St. Albans.

October 20th. Father came up to see me, brought some cigars. I sent my blanket home by him. Saw Sergeant Ferry, who was going to Montpelier.<sup>4</sup>

October 21st. Slept in Ben's and Warren's bed. Stayed all the forenoon with Pearsons.

October 22nd. Uncle Young came to see me and we went downtown together.<sup>5</sup> I found I could get a pair of cavalry pants for \$15.

October 23rd. Drew a shirt and pair of drawers of Pearsons and after Sunday Inspection went to the sutlers and had a pie to eat. After dinner Barney Stone and I went chestnutting, but did not find many.

October 24th. Monday went downtown and was measured for a pair of pants and vest of light blue to cost \$12.00.

October 25th. Went with Uncle Young into the steward's office to see about his going home as his time was out. Carried my cavalry jacket to Cane and Bracket to have it fixed over.

26th. Uncle Young got his pass to go home and report to Burlington on the 1st of November and took the cars for Sutton. Pearsons and I went to the funeral of Lieutenant Colonel Cummings of the 17th Vermont.<sup>6</sup> He was buried with Masonic honors.

27th. Laid in bed nearly all day reading General McClellan's report.<sup>7</sup>

28th. Rained nearly all day.

29th. Stone and I went downtown after my new shirt, had to wait two hours to have my chevrons put on. Went into a saloon and had some pie and cheese. Paid \$21.75 for the clothes, but left the vest to be cut off at the top and bottom. Got my box at the Express Office and sent it up by Keenen. Opened it and found that some of the things—honey, stationary and stamps had been stolen. Received six letters from the regiment.

October 30th. Sunday Inspection. The Doctor wanted to know who I was. Went to church in the evening. Borrowed a paper of Hyatt telling about the conduct of the Vermont Cavalry.<sup>8</sup>

31st. We were all mustered for pay. Dr. Hanley recommended me for a furlough and I carried it in. The steward wanted me to read the muster rolls for the others to write.

November 1st. Read muster rolls all day. Heard that Colonel Bennett was downtown and went after supper, but he had gone home.<sup>9</sup>

2d. Read muster rolls all day, some girls came up and wanted to see Bacon. After supper went downtown and saw Ben Stewart off. Went and had a pie to eat. 150 patients came in.

3d. Rained all day. Langdon Cummings and I intended to go up to the Reed H[ouse] and get some dinner, but did not on account of the rain.

November 4th. Heard that they were going to furlough all that were able to travel. Some went home today. One man stole my socks and handkerchief.

5th. Got my furlough and transportation free. Packed up and came home. Got shaved at Remington's shop. Went out in the village after supper and saw the boys.

6th. Went to church in the forenoon and sat with Dwight. Then went up to his house, had dinner and came back. After supper went down to the field and up to the meadow.

7th. In the morning went over to Mr. Hill's after some sheep. After dinner went up to St. Johnsbury and saw the new cavalry.<sup>10</sup>



8th. Rode up to St. Johnsbury with Loren Woods. Voted before noon, took dinner at Mr. Brigham's. Stayed with Dwight all night.

9th. Took Dwight's team and went up to Uncle Higgin's. Went hunting with Clark Williams and Loren Packard. After supper came down to St. Johnsbury and Dwight came down to Passumpsic and made a visit.

10th. Called on Hattie Parks in the forenoon. The Soldiers' Aid Society met at our house in the afternoon. Lydia and I took tea at Elmore's. Loren and I went up to the plain and I stayed all night.

11th. Dwight carried me home and we made arrangements to be present at the oyster supper at Mr. Remmick's; in the evening I got ready and went.

12th. Joseph and I went up to St. Johnsbury to get some pictures, pail, &c. Willie came down with me and we went back on the cars. I went up to Newport. I saw Celia at the table in Buck and Lender's Hotel, also Henry Fletcher.

13th. Stayed at Newport all day. In the afternoon went into the dining room and talked with Celia. Inquired for Decker, but could not find him.<sup>11</sup>

November 14th. Saw Sergeant Hicks in the morning and we came down in the cars together.<sup>12</sup> I stopped at St. Johnsbury and saw Captain Grout.<sup>13</sup> Stayed with Willie Jackson all night. Tended store for Dwight while he went up to the Center.

15th. Got my boots at Lonergans and paid for them. Went home on the cars and went to the Gould Auction with George Goss. Dwight and I went down to Mr. Armington's to see Nell and Mahala. Went home with Arch Miller and Celia and I went up to Mr. Armington's in the evening. Found Dwight there and stayed till half past one. Dwight got home at daylight.

November 16th. Elmore and I went up to the auction, but did not stay a great while as it snowed and was cold. In the evening Loren Woods and I were standing on the store step when Deborah and Celia went by, so we went with them to Mr. Brown's and stayed till ten o'clock.

17th. Packed up my box and started for Brattleboro on the morning train. Found Barney on the cars and talked with him till we got to Hanover where I stopped.<sup>14</sup> He paid me \$10 and Father let me have \$25. I found George Ide and went to dinner with him where I saw Henry. In the afternoon went to the anniversary of some of the societies and in the evening to a concert by the Mendelsohn Quintelle Chorus and heard Miss Addie Ryan sing. Went to the restaurant and had some ale.

November 18th. Slept with Henry. Went to prayers with George. Rode down to the depot on a stage coach with Henry. Got on the cars and came to Brattleboro. Reported at the Steward's Office, found they were all full, so I went over and stayed with [illegible]. Went in to see Hidden.<sup>15</sup> Went down town in the evening with Warner.

November 19th. Helped Pearsons to issue clothing to the Hospital. Went into the bath room and took a bath. Went to see Dow and Marly the first part of the evening and played euchre. We lost.

November 20th. Went down town with Pearsons. Wrote to Celia.

21st. Rained all day. Paid off \$48.00. Sixty or seventy men went to the regiments. Old Wood got some whiskey and he and Short and Connor had all they could carry.

22d. Went to see Dr. Phelps and told him that I wanted to go to my regiment. Examined me and told me to come in after dinner and he would give me transportation to New York. Got my orders and Pearsons and I went down town. Got measured for a coat to be made. I ordered it. I took the three o'clock train and arrived in New York about midnight. Put up at Lovejoy's Hotel.

November 23rd. Got breakfast at Lovejoy's. Saw Loomis. Went up to Mr. Pierce's store and from there to his home. Had lunch and went down to the hotel to get my overcoat. Stayed at Mr. Pierce's all night.

24th. Went down to Rahway with Miss Pierce and Emma to spend Thanksgiving. Mr. Pierce came down about two P. M. and then we had dinner. Mr. Brown took us out riding round town. Stayed all night.

November 25th. Mr. Pierce and I came back in the morning, went to the Medical Director, D. E., went up to Henry Tyson's and took dinner. Henry went with me to Washington Market and I went to Castle Garden to get my transportation, but he was not in. Got my supper at a restaurant and went home with Mr. Pierce.

26th. Called with Aunt Fanny to see Emily. Went down to the Battery and got my transportation. Called at Fairbanks' Store and saw Cyrus Kendall and Carruth. Took dinner at a restaurant. Went home with Cyrus and went with himself and wife to Niblo's Garden to see the Corsican Brothers. Stayed all night with him.

27th. Took breakfast with Cyrus and then went down to Lovejoy's Hotel, where I stayed all day and saw George Woods. Went down to the ferry boat, came near getting left, but had to wait two hours at Jersey City. Took the cars at seven thirty P. M. and arrived in Baltimore at five A. M.

28th. Went to the Provost Marshal's and from there to the Quarter Masters Office, Number 8 S and got transportation to Harper's Ferry. Went into the Camden Hospital, but did not have time to stop. Started at nine A. M. and arrived at Harper's Ferry about three P. M. Reported at the Provost Marshal's Office and he sent me to remount camp at Pleasant Valley. Saw Woodard, but stayed with some of Company L at the provost guard.<sup>16</sup>

29th. Agree to pay Woodard \$10 for his horse. Drew haversacks, canteen, half a tent. Woodard and I saddled up and went to Rohersville. Came back to Mr. Toby and had supper. Stayed till seven thirty P. M. and were stopped coming home by the pickets, but they let us pass.

30th. Woodard and I took some clothes down to a house to have them washed. He went to a singing school at Rohersville.

December 1st. Went up to see Austin<sup>17</sup> and took dinner with him. He agreed to go to the regiment with me and take care of my horse.

December 2d. After dinner Austin and I went up to Maryland Heights. Could see in to Harper's Ferry where they were making preparations to hang a renegade who had deserted from the 67th New York and joined

Mosby's gang. He was captured only two days before. Saw the big 32 pounders, but could not get into the fort. Could see to Charlestown, and the pike looked like a great long snake. Began to rain as we got home.

December 3rd. Rather cloudy and foggy all day and rained some. Heard the Sixth Corps had gone on its way to Petersburg. Woodard went on patrol and did not get back till ten or eleven P.M. Saw one of my Camden Hospital acquaintances in the Guard House.

4th. Yesterday morning inspection of the Provost Guard by Captain Porter. Saddled up my horse and rode down to Sandy Hook. Woodard went up the Valley. The Guard had to go in the night.

5th. Went up in the evening to see Austin and when I came back found that Lieutenant Lewis had been there.

6th. Went up to see Lewis. Found they were going to draw horses tomorrow. Started for Knoxville, but could not get there on account of pickets. Lent John Woodard \$5.00.

7th. Went up and gave my name for a horse. Our regiment came near not being mounted, but part of them were. Picked me out a horse and one for Austin. Saddled up, were inspected, drew grain and cartridges, and started just before dark. We were rear guard. Went to Halltown and camped. Austin had the sorrel horse and I rode the black one.

8th. Started soon after daylight and marched to Corps Headquarters where we were inspected by Captain Lee, who acted as though he was drunk. Chased a man on a white horse. Marched over to Division Headquarters, reported at Brigade Headquarters and then to the regiment. Stayed with Captain Cummings.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### The Winter of 1864-65

On December 9th the regiment was camped about two miles southwest of Winchester, which must have been very near the old Kernstown battlefield. We had a picket line out across the country from the "Back Road" to the pike. Captain Cummings received his commission as major and was detailed on a court martial. Colonel Wells was in command of the regiment and Major Hall<sup>1</sup> was a prisoner. The men had built some houses, but we were uncertain whether we should stay there all winter or not.

On the 13th Major Cummings was Division Officer of the Day and I went along the picket line with him. We stopped a short time at a Mrs. Carter's who lived in a very large house not very far from Newtown. She belonged to one of the "First Families of Virginia" and had seen better days. All her barns, wheat stacks, blacksmith shop, and corn mill had been burned by stragglers and before the war she owned about one hundred slaves and the same number of horses and mules, which, of course, were all gone. Her son was a "refugee," but his wife lived with her, and a very good looking woman she was too. The house was in considerable disorder, but Mrs. Carter excused herself by saying that it was just as our "bummers" left it. She proposed that if we would furnish a turkey for Christmas, she would cook it and have dinner together.

The 15th of December we heard of Sherman's success and the next day one of our batteries fired a salute in honor of Thomas' victory at Nashville. The next day was carbine drill, with dress parade in the afternoon and officer's school in the evening. On the 18th we had Sunday morning Inspection and divine services as usual, and received notice to move next morning.

On December 19th we had "Reveille" at four o'clock, "Boots and Saddles" at five and we moved out at six thirty. It rained some, but we found that all of Custer's division was along, and we marched up the Valley Pike till towards night, with the 1st Vermont in advance, and when the column camped near Woodstock, we went beyond to establish the pickets. At the Narrow Passage Creek Cummings found a few Rebels and came back to set a trap for them.<sup>2</sup> He motioned towards the cedar bushes as I came up

with my company,<sup>3</sup> but he gave no orders, so that we knew not what he wanted. I went into the bushes while most of the company followed him down the Pike. His intention was to have us hide in the woods while he went down to the bridge alone, and expecting that some of the Johnnies would chase him back by us, we would be in ambush ready to capture them.

His plans were good, but as he said not a word to us, but only motioned, of course we could not understand it. When he came in sight of the bridge so many of the men were in sight of him that the enemy refused to come over. Then he was mad and ordered us to charge, which we did, that is, about a dozen of us.

About two hundred yards beyond the bridge is the Narrow Passage—a natural causeway with precipitous sides formed by the approach of the Shenandoah River and Passage Creek—a tributary. This causeway is about fifty yards in length and just wide enough to admit the passage of the Valley Turnpike, which is constructed along it. The streams on either side appear as if endeavoring to meet, but hindered by a barrier of solid limestone rock, sixty or eighty feet in height.

Across this passage we chased them, and up the hill about a mile and a half, till we came in sight of Edinburg, and a squad of cavalry in line, when we came into line, and after watching them a short time returned to the command near Woodstock. Our pickets were established near the creek and in the night three Johnnies crossed above the bridge, came in behind Kneeland of Company C, killed his horse and carried him off.<sup>4</sup>

The next morning we were astir bright and early and continued up the Valley. At New Market we found a telegraph, but no instrument or operator. I severed the wire in several places with my sabre, in emulation of Colonel Thompson's reported feat at Orange Court House in 1862. We camped that night at Lacey's Springs, eight miles beyond New Market, our regiment on the left of the pike.

The weather was cold and stormy, more or less rain and sleet. At four o'clock in the morning we saddled up, built good fires and got breakfast. At about five o'clock, while we were standing in line, Payne's brigade of Rebel cavalry, who had been camped near Staunton, and had marched all night, charged in on to us from the west.<sup>5</sup> They drove the 1st New Hamp-

shire, 8th and 15th New York Cavalry entirely out of the way, coming in amongst the wagons and ambulances near the road, while some of them even came farther and began to fire at our camp fires, supposing us to be near them, but at the first shot we had moved out a little away from them and mounted up. We moved across the Pike and then Mitchell's battalion charged, while the rest of us followed up in line.

Then we came into line and as it grew a little lighter we saw a squad of men in front of us on the hill a little above us. The fence was thrown down and while we were moving through the gap by fours, we discovered that they were Rebels and charged them. Up the hill we went, helter-skelter, capturing some, and the balance disappeared in the woods. Then we came into line and a squad of them tried to get behind us, but we drove them off. Then we were recalled, and while waiting for the column to get in motion, saw two Johnnies coming towards us with a prisoner. They came up to us and then they found out that we were Yanks and not Johnnies as they supposed. They had robbed their prisoner (one of our men) of his watch, so the person changed places with them and took their watches.

The column started on the return, our regiment on the flank. We camped that night just west of Woodstock on a high hill, while the wind blew fearfully. It was reported that some of the prisoners who had on blue pants had them stripped off by order of General Custer, and had to march bare legged.

Next day we marched to near Kernstown and camped in the woods. The weather was intensely cold, the road was full of ice and snow, and about forty men in the command were frost bitten.

It was reported that we had captured about two hundred prisoners, but I suppose the main object of the trip was to make a diversion, and keep some of the enemy's cavalry in the Valley while Torbert with all the rest of our cavalry made a raid towards Gordonsville.<sup>6</sup>

This was on the 22nd and Colonel Wells wanted to know what a fellow was agoing to do who had agreed to eat a Christmas dinner in Vermont. The 24th he went home on a fifteen day furlough and I went to Division Headquarters to get mustered in as First Lieutenant of Company D, but Captain Barnhardt wasn't in. The 26th I was mustered to date from November 19th, being the date of my commission.

We stayed in this camp without much shelter while the weather was extremely cold, making out muster rolls and doing picket duty till the 29th, when the camp was moved to near the Middle Road, about a mile north of the Romney Pike, and named Camp Russell in honor of General D. A. Russell, killed at Opequan.<sup>7</sup> Our camp was on the side of a hill sloping to the east, with the officers' tents on the top of the ridge. We were told to build winter quarters and put up hitching poles. Company L and some of the others built quite good log houses and we all made ourselves very comfortable. The forest was rather open, but furnished plenty of firewood from the oak and chestnut trees. The fence rails had all been used up long before. The 31st we were mustered for pay.

From this time till the 27th of February 1865 we remained in this camp, engaging in occasional scouts, and heavy details for picketing. New Year's night was celebrated by most of the officers who called on each other and wound up at the sutlers. Lieutenant Barrows sang very feelingly and Captain Hazelton tumbled into a brush heap going home and scratched his face.<sup>8</sup> Five per cent of the men were allowed to go home on furlough and on January 3rd they arrived and most of the recipients went the next day, about twenty-five in all. Major Cummings was in command of the regiment for a short time till Lieutenant Colonel Hall arrived from Camp Stoneman, where he had been since his release from prison. Colonel Wells, after his return, was in command of the brigade.

On the 6th of January the whole command was called out to witness the execution of two of the 3rd New Jersey Cavalry for desertion. They had deserted but a short time before, passed through our lines south, and meeting some of the men in gray inquired for Mosby, as they desired to join his gang. These men volunteered to conduct them to his present stopping place, and took them safe to General Sheridan's headquarters. The men in gray were Sheridan's scouts.

The 12th Lieutenant Moore<sup>9</sup> and twenty men went out to Cedar Creek on the Middle Road accompanied by Dr. Nims, who went out to treat a woman accidentally shot by one of Company B.<sup>10</sup>

Our horses suffered a great deal from the cold, and by having to stand in the mud, but although we could not help the first, the last was remedied in a degree by splitting logs and making floors for them to stand upon.



Occasionally a deserter from the enemy came in from the enemy, and on the 20th some teams went out with rations for the citizens of Newtown, who were said to be starving, and whose situation was certainly getting worse than that of the inhabitants of the region north of New York City during the Revolution of "Cow Boy" times.<sup>11</sup> On the 24th we went on a scout up the Valley. Reveille at five o'clock and we moved at seven. When we got through Newtown, Companies D and I were sent ahead as advance guards. We had two of Sheridan's scouts with us and went as far as Strasburg and the advance to Fisher's Hill. We found two of the 5th New York wounded in the village and brought them in. We arrived in camp just after night.

About this time an agent of a Baltimore firm appeared in camp getting the necessary data for company records and taking subscriptions for them at two dollars each, payable when the regiment was paid off. Considering the fact that we were not paid off (except at White House Landing while on a raid) till next June when we were mustered out at Burlington, I am of the opinion that he did not get rich out of the operation, although he had "cheek" enough for a government mule and didn't wait to be asked to sit and eat something, but invited himself.

The Corps was reviewed on the first day of February by General Sheridan. After a while we had to put in requests for what we needed and some of the company commanders, calling for so many ordnance stores, the general sent a commission to inquire to the reason. I was requested to make an answer in writing and answered something as follows: that since May 4th there had been killed, wounded and captured of Company D fifty-seven men, and in nearly every case a full set of equipments had been lost, and that I had not had, or called for, ordnance stores to the amount of those lost in action, which I presume was satisfactory, as I never heard from it again.

On the 17th of February we had a great time snowballing with the 22nd New York Cavalry, who were camped just west of us. We called it "Fisher's Hill all over again," one party flanking on the right, while the other charged in front. The next day the 8th, 15th, and 22nd New York regiments joined forces and came over and attacked. It seemed as if this must have been more snow than usual this winter for it snowed about every other day and some times a foot or more at once. Coming in one day we met General Custer and some of his staff taking a sleigh ride.

During this time we had been receiving horses, drilling the men day times, and holding officers' and non-commissioned officers' school in the evening, and in fact, making ourselves as efficient as possible, as if the war was agoing to last another three years.

Some of my men had picked up Spencer carbines and Captain Mitchell having put in a requisition for more of them than he had men, when they arrived I secured the balance, giving me enough to arm my whole company with them and surrendered the Sharpes. I had always supposed that when we returned to the vicinity of Petersburg, we should march overland and had expressed that opinion at the time we left there, but did not suppose that it would come so soon as it did. On February 25th we received orders to get ready to march the next day, taking such stores as we needed, leaving the rest in camp and that two officers would be detailed to remain behind and collect and take to Harper's Ferry all property thus left in camp. This was a "God send" to the officers who were short on their property returns as they could certify that every item that they were short of in the spring was left in Camp Russell by order of General Custer.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### From the Valley to Petersburg

On February 27th we had Reveille at four o'clock in the morning, led into line at six o'clock, reported to brigade headquarters and the whole corps came together at Kernstown, marched to Woodstock, and camped for the night. Brevet Brigadier General William Wells commanded our brigade.<sup>1</sup> General Chapman had been left along with General Torbert in the Valley under General Hancock. General Sheridan commanded the Middle Military Division and the Cavalry Corps and General Custer and Merritt the two divisions of three brigades each.

Our instructions were to proceed up the Valley, cross the James River, and join Sherman in North Carolina, breaking the railroads and canals, and doing all the damage we could to the Confederacy. We did not quite carry out this program for reasons that will appear in due time.

The second night out we camped near Lacey's Springs and the next day we were the advance of the division, but the First Division was ahead of us. Harrisonburg was quiet, but we thought we could see where some cavalry had bivouacked the night before. Flankers were kept out where it was practicable and when not, a picket was put on each side ready to be relieved by the brigade following.

I was sent out that way and was unable to join the regiment till after dark and they had gone into camp, as we could not get by the column, but had to take our place in it. After wandering around in the darkness inquiring for the 1st Vermont and for General Sheridan, we at last found the camp in the woods, and every company had one or more sheep that they had captured on the road and brought in. The bridge at Mount Crawford had been saved by the advance guard fording the river and driving away the party that was endeavoring to burn it.

Our camp was just north of Staunton, but I presume that General Sheridan had his quarters in town. Staunton used to be the point where persons left the railroad and took stages and coaches for the different mineral springs in that vicinity, and as the war had interrupted with those businesses, the coaches were laid by for future use. In the back yard of the

hotel I think I saw nearly a hundred of them of all kinds, ages and descriptions.

We were in the saddle bright and early and upon arriving in Staunton, instead of keeping straight up the Valley to Lexington, as Hunter had done the year before, we turned off to the left towards Waynesboro, leaving the hard macadamized turnpike and taking a dirt road, no doubt good enough in summer, but very poor indeed now. The village of Waynesboro is situated on a ridge on the northwest bank of the South Fork of the Shenandoah. It is very near the foot of the Blue Ridge and Rockfish Gap. The Virginia Central Railroad passes through the village from Staunton, crosses the river on an iron bridge that we were trying to destroy in the fall, when the enemy charged down from the gap and saved it. The railroad then rises along the ridge (slabing as we termed it) at a very steep grade and finally passes through the top of the mountain in a tunnel a mile long.

Halfway between Staunton and Waynesboro we passed the log houses that had been the winter quarters of Jubal Early's army, and when we arrived in sight of this town, we found that army, what there was of it, posted on the ridge just west of town. We could see infantry behind breastworks of rails, also some cavalry and the artillery spoke for itself: for as we formed in column by battalions they opened upon us, and as they knew the ground perfectly and appeared to have good gunners, they made it hot for us.

We withdrew to the other side of the road (to be sheltered by a belt of woods) breaking by fours in good order, but I noticed that the rear guard kept well closed up. But on the other side of the road we were no better off, for as soon they soon dropped a shell into Company A's ranks, taking a coffee pot off from one horse, the rider fortunately being on the ground, and then killing a member of Company A and his horse.<sup>2</sup> The shell passed through his thigh and did not kill him instantly, but I presume he bled to death and was buried nearby. The surgeons tried to stand the flow of blood, but found it impossible to do so.

While this was going on, General Custer had been reconnoitering on the right and most of the division was dismounted and sent off to the right to flank the enemy's works. The 1st Vermont was now sent some distance to the left of the road, passing down the lane in plain sight of the enemy, who shelled us fiercely, we were soon afraid that a shell might strike a rail

in the fence, and carrying it through the column sideways, do considerable injury, but no harm resulted. Soon we heard the firing on the right where the dismounted men were charging, when we started for the enemy across the fields, the 8th New York being in the road, in fact, Custer's whole division charged at once, which was his favorite method of fighting.

The enemy gave away at all points after firing a few shots which did no injury to us. The 8th New York, being in the road, followed the flying Rebels across the river and made the most captures, while we floundered through the mud knee deep across the fields as fast as our horses could carry us, till we struck the road leading down the river along which we chased a party of cavalry for half a mile or so. The regiment captured about fifty prisoners, one gun, and two caissons. The whole amount of captures that day were eleven hundred men, eight flags, thirteen guns, and about fifty wagons.

When we were in line at the top of the knoll north of the village we could occasionally see a Rebel come out of a house on the other side of the river in which he had concealed himself and make a break across the plain between the river and the Blue Ridge, and it was amusing to see him drop flat on the ground when we fired at him with our carbines, but the distance was so far that no damage was done to them, and I presume they made their escape.

The enemy had a train of cars which they ran backwards and forwards between the village and the Blue Ridge, blowing the whistle to make us believe that reinforcements were arriving, but when we drove the enemy out of the village, we caught sight of this train just disappearing through the mountains. General Early escaped on horseback over the Ridge almost alone and never stopped running till he had put the ocean between himself and the hated Yankees.<sup>3</sup>

When we crossed the river we found a lot of wagons which the 8th New York had captured containing the books and papers of the Rebel army. While climbing the Ridge we met other wagons returning loaded with hay and I ordered the darkey driving one of them to turn around and follow us, thinking it would be a good idea to have some hay for our horses when we went into camp, but the mules were so tired the driver was unable to make them draw the load up the mountain.

We crossed the top of the mountain after dark, which was a great disappointment to one as I understand the view there from is magnificent. We camped that night near the foot of the mountain and were in now what is called the Piedmont section of Virginia. We marched all next day in the rain, arriving at Charlottesville at dark. We burned several bridges across the Rivanna River and one depot. Mosby's home stood near the depot and was all right when we passed, but I learned that it was burned by some stragglers.<sup>4</sup>

We camped to the right of Charlottesville and came near being drowned out in the night by the rain. The next morning we saddled up and went to tearing up the Lynchburg Railroad and burning the bridges. I was detailed to guard a large house nearby. The men kept coming to me saying they wanted whiskey, that there were thirteen barrels hid there, but the proprietor denied it. Very soon I saw a stream of men with canteens going in and out of a little building across the road. I went over and drove them away, but the last man carried a big jug with him which I supposed contained the "persimmon brew" that the planter told about.

We were recalled after dark and went into camp in the same place. It was near this spot that the Hessians were confined who we captured in the Revolutionary War.<sup>5</sup> Many then afterwards settled near here. Just south of us across the river was Carter's Mountain, and on the summit of which was Monticello, Jefferson's former residence. It was here too that the legislature of Virginia was in session when Tarleton made his raid and came near bagging the whole lot.

The fifth was spent in foraging for supplies while waiting for the trains to come up, as the rains had made the roads almost impassable. I went out with a detachment several miles after corn and got scared a little, but we got our corn. Then we went after flour, but did not get any, and in the evening went all over Charlottesville after horse shoes and got some.

While in this town the chaplain and some others took possession of a printing office and prepared to issue a paper, but as we left there the next morning it was not done. In leaving we retraced our steps about a mile to the University of Virginia, "founded by Thomas Jefferson," and passing in rear of that celebrated institution, we followed a dirt road that ran nearly parallel with the Lynchburg Railroad, which we tore up and destroyed as

circumstances would permit. We camped in the woods, and during the night, the material was brought in for the grand drunk the next day.

It was reported that thirteen barrels of applejack were concealed nearby, and men were busy all night bringing it in pails and canteens. The next day a great many were intoxicated, and "Tanglefoot" was plenty as water. Lieutenant Barröws was under arrest and some of the men had to be strapped onto their horses. We burned several short, but high, bridges, and on the afternoon of March 8th arrived at the James River at New Market. It rained all the afternoon and the camp was wet, cold and cheerless. George Austin, who was leading my pack mule, refused to exchange him for one with sore shoulders out of the pontoon train, and being a little the worse for applejack, exchanged some words with the quartermaster, who left him in charge of the provost marshal. I went without my supper that night and we never saw Austin again till the war was over, when he turned up in the dismounted camp at Pleasant Valley, Maryland. He reported that he escaped from the provost and was captured by some guerrillas who kept him a few days, and then escaping from them, he made his way along the Blue Ridge some one hundred miles to Harper's Ferry.

The bridge at New Market had been burned by the enemy and our pontoon bridge was too short to reach, so that we could not cross and join Sherman. Sheridan would have been justified by his orders in returning to Winchester, but that was not his style. He knew that he was needed at Petersburg and there he would go, although in so doing he left an independent command and became a subordinate. We marched down the river on the tow path of the canal, breaking the latter at every convenient place, turning the river into it, in one place, and allowing it to run out in another, carrying away the embankment for a long distance, thus making breaks that could not be repaired for months.

Near Columbia we crossed the North River on a viaduct of stone, on which the tow path was just wide enough for the wagons, with a solid wall on one side and sheer down into the canal on the other, and not an inch to spare, as the wagon tires were flush with the wall towards the water, while the hub on the other side grazed the stone. We remained here one day while Sheridan sent some of his scouts across the country to Fredericksburg with dispatches for Grant. Foraging parties were sent out who secured quantities of flour, bacon, sorghum and the like.

The 12th of March we made a long march from Columbia to the Virginia Central Railroad which we struck at Fredericks Hall Station after dark and tore up for some distance. The whole regiment was dismounted, and seizing the track by main force, turned it bottom side up. We spent nearly all the next day tearing up the railroad. The ties were heaped up and set on fire, the rails laid across the pile, and when sufficiently hot were bent down and left to cool. Occasionally we exchanged a few shots with scattering parties of the enemy.

The night of the 14th we camped at Ground Squirrel Bridge on the same ground that we camped last May on "Sheridan's Raid." We left here about two o'clock in the morning, moving straight for Ashland, where the First Brigade had a skirmish with Pickett's Division, who had been sent up from Richmond on the cars to intercept us. I think it was here that Sergeant Jones made one of his famous charges with the pack train.<sup>6</sup>

Before we reached here General Custer went back with the guide on the strength of the rumor that General Early was concealed near by, but nothing came of it. We passed Ashland in safety, and crossing the North Anna, camped at eleven that evening. Moving down the Peninsula between the Pamunkey and Mattaponi, we arrived at White House Landing on the 18th and went into camp.

The next morning we crossed on the bridge leading our horses and I was put under arrest because I would not run and lead my horses. We had marched a greater number of miles in the enemy's country than Sherman did in his famous "March to the Sea," had captured more men, more horses, more wagons, more colors, and in less time, and with less than one tenth as many men as he had, and less than one hundredth part as much newspaper glory. Much has been said and written about the cavalry's "foraging," and some men now seemed to glory in the name Sheridan's Robbers. I think that this was carried on to its greatest extent on this march. If I remember correctly, one started out with five days rations (or if he had more than that amount issued he threw away the balance for no haversack will hold more than five days rations) with a little sugar, coffee, and salt in the wagons. We were in the enemy's country twenty-one days without communications, and of course "lived on the country." Now the phrase "living on the country" means some damage to the same in the best light you can put it. Place six or seven thousand men in a rather thinly settled region and they and their horses get all their living for not more than



two days within a circle of say five miles in diameter, and they are bound to clear it out pretty clean. At the time mentioned the matter was arranged so systematically as possible. Any enlisted man found away from the column without a pass from a field officer could be dismounted by any officer and have his horse taken. All foraging parties were to be under the command of a commissioned officer, who was to keep them together and be responsible for their good conduct. He was not to allow them to straggle behind and I was reprimanded for allowing some men to go before or ahead of the detachment. Two officers of a New York regiment were dismounted and footed it about one hundred miles for allowing some of their men to remain behind at a house where they were caught stealing something. It was against orders to cut across corners although a person might save half a miles travel.

We found here a brigade of infantry and some supplies of food and clothing, which I suppose had been sent there by the request of General Sheridan in his dispatch sent from Fredericks Hall. The weather had been quite wet making the roads soft and so much mud had been bad for the horses. More than three thousand had fallen by the way on barely reaching this camp had to be turned over to the quartermaster's department (to be killed or cured as circumstances might permit) on account of the dreadful scolding which swelled the legs and carried a kind of foot rot which no one ever yet found a cure, except to let the disorder run its course.

We remained at this place till the 24th of March, drawing and issuing rations and clothing and receiving our mail. The pay rolls were made out and the pay master paid us all. While we were resting and refitting, leaving General Merritt to conduct the column from the White House to the James, Sheridan rode across the Peninsula and visited General Grant at City Point, where also he found President Lincoln, who came to be near the army on the last great effort for which all were preparing, and an opportunity of "conversing with these captains of the war."

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### The Final Campaign

We crossed the Chickahominy at Jones Bridge and marched to the James River, halting a short time at Charles City Court House. In the afternoon of the 26th we marched up the river by Malvern Hill to Deep Bottom and crossed over the James River to Bermuda Hundred on the long pontoon bridge, leading our horses. Major Cummings joined us at Bermuda Hundred and here also the members of Company D presented me with a sabre.

While we were crossing the river the President with General Grant and Sherman were looking at us from the steamer River Queen which lay in the stream just below the bridge and General Grant was explaining to them how he was concentrating his forces for the last supreme effort. All that he feared that General Lee would take the alarm and steal away before he was quite ready and he must have trembled as the rumbling of the hoofs and the clanging of the sabres on the bridge were echoed by the up-river hills, for he feared that the reverberation might reach the ears of Lee and awake him from his trance and start him up crying for his horse. He slept well through it all though.

We camped that night on the windy south bank of the James. The next morning we were off bright and early crossing the Appomattox at Point of Rocks, moving along the Military Railroad, getting benefit of some shells the Rebels fired at a passing train and camping near Hancock Station. "The circle of the hunt was now complete. The lashed dogs of War lay stretched from Newmarket north of the James to Hatchers Run, a distance of more than thirty miles, ready for the spring whenever the meditative soldier, who sat silent in the little hut at City Point should sound the 'Laissez Aller.'"<sup>1</sup>

While in this camp quite a number of remounted men came to us and we were also visited by a couple of English army officers in citizens dress. Major Cummings wished to show them what we were like, so I sent up Michael Hogan<sup>2</sup> with a Spencer carbine as a sample of a volunteer soldier and his arms.

Five days rations for the men and three days for the horses were issued besides what little whiskey the commissary sold to the officers.

"At the head of his magnificent command possessing the entire confidence of every man who followed, General Sheridan rode out from his camp on the morning of the 29th of March 1865 bound for Dinwiddie Court House on the Boydton Plank Road, and bound to crush the rebellion, so far as one may by precept and example could effect that desired consummation. He was under immediate orders of Lieutenant General Grant, and commanded the cavalry as a separate army, as General Meade commanded the Army of the Potomac and General Ord the Army of the James. His subordinate commanders were General Merritt, commanding the first and third cavalry divisions from the Shenandoah Valley—General Devin commanding the former and General Custer the latter—and General Crook, commanding the second division (Gregg's old) In the first division the brigades were led by General Gibbs, Colonel Stagg and Colonel Fitzhugh; in the second division, by Generals Davies, Irvine Gregg, and Smith; and in the third division, by Colonels Pennington, Wells, and Capehart.

General Sheridan had been ordered to get out toward Dinwiddie Court House, and the enemy's left and rear, as best he could. General Grant wrote: 'move your cavalry at as an early hour as you can, and without being confined to any particular road or roads.' The avowed object of the movement of the armies was to get the enemy out of his entrenched works, where he could be attacked with some chance of success. If the enemy should come out, General Sheridan was to 'do in,' and was assured that he would be properly reported; if the enemy should not come out, the general was to go on a raid, and cry havoc along the enemy's Southside and Danville Railroads. It was a Micawber-like move at first, partly to help along the cavalry, partly in expectation that something would turn up. The Confederacy was upturned shortly, but just on this particular morning nobody had a very clear idea of what was going to happen, and General Grant himself apparently did not come to a realizing sense of the possibilities within reach, and did not feel grasping, until he got well out into the country that night, when he was seized with a desire of 'ending the matter.'

Meanwhile, General Sheridan, keeping to himself his reflections and hopes, whatever they might be, was carrying out his original orders in a literal manner; and getting up very early in the morning (as early as he can

being a good deal earlier than anybody else wants to), had crossed the Jerusalem Plank Road, and was exercising his topographical genius in finding roads in general and not particular, leading in the direction in which his face was set.

Whoever has traveled the highways of Dinwiddie Couty, Virginia, in the melting days of spring, has probably recollections of black soil appearing here and there, islands in ponds of black water fringed with green; whoever has left the highways for a short-cut will remember how his horse broke through the upper crust and found apparently nothing below but space."<sup>3</sup>

Crossing Rowanty Creek on a temporary bridge put up by the 1st Maine Cavalry, we were all counted and found to number nine thousand men and horses, in the Second Division 3,300 and in the other two 5,700. A few Rebel pickets were captured on the further side and we only went a few miles after crossing when we went into camp, or rather came into line and were told to "unbridle and feed and make coffee." We supposed that we should remain here about an hour, but we did remain about thirty hours, expecting to move every minute and "standing to horse" most of the time.

The advance of the column occupied Dinwiddie Court House that night, but the continuous rain had made the roads almost impassable for wagons and we had to stay behind to guard and help them along. When we did leave the field that we were in the next afternoon, it seemed as though there was no bottom to the soil, and we hoped it was emblematic of the Confederacy. We lifted and tugged at the wagons, cut trees, and piled rails into the road for corduroy, and when night came, laid down in the woods where ever we happened to be.

The next day was about the same with us. We laid in the pine woods, and while some helped the wagons, others foraged. Sheridan with the First and Second Divisions was having a hard fight at Dinwiddie and in the afternoon he sent back to Custer for help, and he was only too glad to leave the train to Colonel Wells, and taking Pennington's and Capehart's brigades, arrived at the court house just in time to help repulse the enemy, who had been making it hot for us there.

On April 1st we worked on the roads a spell, and then leaving the wagons, we proceeded to Dinwiddie, and as the enemy had fallen back to Five Forks, we followed up, passing some of the Fifth Corps on the way. The distance was about five miles and we were accompanied by an enthusiastic newsboy who was bound to sell his newspapers with a full account of the fight at Fort Stedman.

The firing in front of us was very heavy and, as we came up in rear of the First Brigade, we found them engaged dismounted with the enemy (who were behind breastworks), while the led horses were being taken to the rear, and as all were at fullspeed, things looked rather lively. We passed along the rear till we came to the left of the line, and as the enemy seemed to be flanking the First Brigade, the 15th New York Cavalry was sent to charge the enemy and drive them back, while the balance of the brigade came into line. We saw them (the 15th) charge, and supposing we were to follow, advanced carbines, and then drew sabre and started, but were ordered back, and came into line under the shelter of a little ridge, while Custer stationed his band on the top of the ridge in front of us and ordered them to play.

The Rebels shelled us some, dropping the branches of the pine trees onto us, but inflicting no damage. The 15th New Yorkers were repulsed, and returning, took position along side of us. After a while Custer made a short speech to us, the bugle sounded the charge, and away we went. The other regiments were ahead, while we went slower, keeping in line by battalions. The enemy fought well, but soon gave away all along the line. I think we outflanked the breastworks of the left. A column of the enemy's cavalry came towards us in good order, although the 15th New York was on their right, our infantry was on their left and in front, all pouring in their fire as fast as possible.

This column came right down towards us as cool and in as good order as if on dress parade, till within pistol shot, when they broke and fled and we after them helter-skelter till we struck a cross road which we followed a short distance, then across the fields and onto another road leading to the right. We had captured several prisoners, but as it was getting dark now went slow. We soon saw on the road before us some mounted men, but not knowing if they were Yanks or Rebs we told Woodard and Kingsbury, who were in the advance, to find out. They rode close up to the strangers when they asked or demanded "Who are you?" Someone said "We are

Vermonters" and they replied "We are Carolinians" and fired. One of them had a pistol close to Kingsbury's face, but it was so dark, and they were in so much of a hurry, that no one on our side was hurt.

It threw us into some confusion, and when we got straightened out, the Rebels were gone. We followed after them a short distance, someone claiming to know that there was a gun ahead stuck in the mud, but after going through the same operation again, and hearing Custer's bugle on the other road, which showed that we were rather too far ahead, we returned to the column, which marched back about a mile and went into a bivouac.

This is what I saw of the Battle of Five Forks, in which the usual order had been changed, since the infantry did the flanking (on the right) while the cavalry charged the enemy's works in front. The force we had been fighting consisted of Pickett's and Johnson's divisions of infantry with Wise's independent brigade and Fitzhugh Lee's, Rosser's and W. H. Lee's cavalry. We captured between five and six thousand men and nearly all his guns and wagons. Lee had stripped his lines around Petersburg to get a force wherewith to defend the Southside Railroad and send Sheridan back into hospital, but instead of accomplishing this, he had to see his own forces completely defeated and scattered, and entirely cut off from Petersburg.

We passed the forenoon of April 2nd in strolling over the battlefield and saw a great many guns and some dead and wounded. About noon we moved up towards the Southside Railroad with our regiment in advance. Company D was the advance guard and Captain Stone came along with a map and showed me the position of the roads and houses where we were to cross the railroad and gave orders how to proceed. When we came in sight of the railroad we saw a man in gray standing on it and John Woodward fired at him. He scampered off down the track and we afterwards found out that he was one of Sheridan's scouts.

Then we crossed the famous railroad, about which so much fighting had been done last winter and to save which Lee had sacrificed Anderson's Corps the day before. Soon we came to some of the Fifth Corps and then the First Division took the advance. Just before night they ran on to Johnson's Division of Rebel infantry at Scott's Corners. The road that we were following them on crossed (or joined) another at right angles on a little knoll. On the further side of the second road they had thrown up tem-

porary works to hold us in check while the trains and ambulances crossed the Namozine Creek beyond. Or what is really the same thing, 'to fight for what many an army has fought for before, that is, for night!

The firing was very rapid and heavy and we were dismounted and moved up into the woods where the shells were dropping the limbs of the trees and all seemed confusion, but we soon mounted up and went back into camp, while part of the regiment went onto the line all night. The road along which the Rebel line was formed ran nearly east and west, and a mile or two from these cross roads ran Namozine Creek, which rising near the Southside Railroad ran in a northerly direction and emptied into the Appomattox about twenty miles above Petersburg. A strip along each bank was rather swampy and the road crossed the stream in the woods on a log bridge, and at a turn in the road.

We moved out at seven in the morning with the 1st Vermont in the advance, but found that the enemy had evacuated his position of the night before as we expected. Company D was then sent ahead as advance guard. We met two men who said they had been sent out two miles and said there were no Rebels to be seen, but they must have been mistaken about the distance, for when our two advance videttes turned the corner and came in sight of the bridge across the creek, they saw some Rebels bathing in it, who immediately retreated to some temporary breastworks on the further side.

Our men came rushing back and reported "Rebel infantry" which report was immediately sent back to the rear. The company was immediately deployed as skirmishers and we tried to advance, but the woods were so thick that we could not advance far. Colonel Wells and General Custer came down on foot and examined the position. Custer ordered a gun to be brought down by hand to the skirmish line and had it fired several times through the thick underbrush in the direction of the enemy, but eliciting no response from them, ordered me to send two men forward on the road to see if the enemy were there yet.

I sent up Clifford and Cassidy<sup>4</sup> and when they turned the corner in sight of the brigade they were well satisfied that the Rebels were there and that they had plenty of ammunition also. Then the 8th New York was ordered to charge them, and as they came down the road mounted, brandishing their sabres, the thought struck me that some of those men had not

long to live, for it seemed evident that the Rebels were determined to make a stand here, but when they turned the corner, the bridge was gone and the column came to a sudden halt.

In the mean time part of our regiment had been dismounted, and crossing the creek lower down, had forced the enemy to evacuate their works. The dismounted men followed the enemy a short distance on foot while we pulled the logs out of the stream in the fording place, and crossing over, followed on. We found the fence on fire and soon the loud explosions from it told us that the Rebels had been up to the very honorable trick of leaving shells to be exploded by the fire as we passed. Soon we came to a caisson on fire on the road which we gave a wide berth.

As we came out into the large open space near Namozine Church, Custer set his band to playing and we saw before us quite a large force of the enemy's cavalry, mounted and dismounted, consisting in part of Baringer's Brigade of North Carolinians. The 8th New York made a charge and drove them some and about this time Lieutenant Custer<sup>5</sup> was shot through the face. Then we charged across the fields somewhat to the right of the road and as we approached the large body of the enemy, it began to melt away and soon was in confused retreat. The fact was that we had taken them just at the time when they were mounting up, and not being able to fight either as infantry or cavalry, we had it all our own way.

Down the road we went pell mell and on after them. Lieutenant Hatch overtook a gun and with a pistol persuaded them to return with it.<sup>6</sup> Several of us followed them four or five miles, and after capturing the wagons which contained some turkeys, a barrel of applejack, some ham and other eatables, we started to return with it. I picked up a couple of loose horses, and in company with a sergeant of the 15th New York, was coming along ahead, when we met a man in gray. He asked what regiment do you belong to and the sergeant incautiously replied the 15th New York. The Johnny turned, put spurs to his horse and fled.

Then we dropped the horses we had picked up, and making a circuit through the fields, came out into the road where it passed through a thick piece of woods. Looking down the road I saw a column of infantry dressed in gray marching across it. My first thought was that it was a lot of prisoners that our men had captured, when I noticed that they had guns in their hands, and then I realized that we were cut off.



We immediately turned around and walked out of sight of them, expecting every moment to receive a volley in our backs, but when we came to a turn in the road where we were out of sight, we put spurs to our horses and soon joined the rest of our party that was cut off, consisting of Captains Stone and Hazelton, Sergeants Norris and Vance and one or two others. After explaining the situation to them, we concluded our best way would be to make a circuit around through the field by the head of the column and try to join our friends on the other side.

This was successfully done, and after picking up a few prisoners on the trip and shooting a big turkey or two, we came onto the road in the rear of our column, and following it up, joined them just at night and went into camp near Deep Creek and in sight of some Rebel trains. We had the big turkey boiled that night, but he tasted so strong of leeks that we did not enjoy it very much. The result of this fight was the capture of four hundred prisoners, one or more guns and colors, and several wagons by our brigade.

The 4th of April we marched up Deep Run, crossed it, marched up it on the other side a short distance till we came to the Second Corps. We massed behind the First Brigade for a spell, and then marching back for some distance, went into camp near a large house. Captain Chandler, Lieutenant Foster and myself with one hundred men were detailed to guard the prisoners near Corps Headquarters. Our prisoners were very hungry, and after we got the guard stationed, we sent some men out with bags to bring in corn on the ear. This was thrown into them and they were allowed to help themselves, some of them rather sarcastically inquired "when we were going to get the long forage for them."

At eleven o'clock that night the whole corps moved back and we followed with the prisoners in the rear of the ammunition train. At daylight we came on to the Second Corps, and took the road to the right. Our prisoners were very tired and hungry and it was impossible to keep them well closed up. A good many of them might have escaped if they had a mind to, but we kept our number good and turned over to General Mason at Army Headquarters 673 men which I believe was a few more than we had received. Very likely scouting parties might have turned in a few odd prisoners during the day, being only too glad to get rid of them. Some of the prisoners asked to be allowed to ride a short distance, claiming they had

done the same by Vermonters captured at Ashland, and I believe the favor was returned in some instances.

We passed General Meade during the day riding in an ambulance. After turning over our prisoners we joined the regiment and went into camp near Jetersville. Some of our infantry were here and had thrown up some rifle pits across the railroad. When we bantered our prisoners on the collapse of the rebellion, they replied by asking us why we were throwing up those earthworks if we were beating them so fast.

We moved out at daylight on the 6th of April off across the fields by the Sixth Corps and entered Amelia Court House. Here we found the remains of ninety-seven caissons and forges which the Rebels had abandoned and burned, as they needed all their animals to draw their guns. They also left here about eight cords of ammunition piled up. Lee had reached this point the day before, expecting to move along the railroad to Danville and there to make a junction with Johnston, but Sheridan had been too quick for him. He had now made another night march, hoping to reach the Richmond and Danville Turnpike and thus get away. We followed on across the country and joined the division about ten o'clock in the evening just beyond Saylor's Creek.

The dead lay strewn like autumn leaves that night on the further bank of that fated stream and as we passed through care had to be exercised to prevent stepping on the dead bodies of men gone to the borne from which no traveler returns. The dead were here virtually piled one upon another and it was the last ditch of thousands.

Next morning General Custer was riding around followed by twenty-nine men carrying twenty-nine Rebel battleflags captured the day previous. He also had about ten thousand prisoners, including Generals Ewell and Custis Lee, in fact, he had about all of Ewell's Corps there. We had reveille early in the morning, but did not move till nine o'clock, when we took our way westward crossing the Southside Railroad at Rice's Station, passing the Sixth Corps. Arriving at Prince Edward Court House, we halted about two hours. Prince Edward Court House is a neat little old-fashioned town of one broad street along the Richmond and Danville Pike, consisting of twenty or thirty houses and one or two stores. Most of the houses are surrounded by hedges of evergreens and nestling under the shadow of large trees. There is also a college here by the name of Hamp-

ton-Sidney. Foraging parties were sent out and refreshments for man and beast were procured and eaten. After supper we moved about six miles and went into camp in the pine woods.

At seven o'clock on the morning of April 8th we moved towards Appomattox Station. General Sheridan knew that Lee was marching westward on the Cumberland Road that leads from Richmond to Lynchburg, and after passing through Appomattox Court House, crossed the railroad at a station of the same name. As Lee had lost his rations that he expected at Amelia, his army must be starving, and very naturally he would have some trains at the station with provisions to feed his hungry men with and to that station we were marching. Passing Prospect, Pamplin and Evergreen Stations, we arrived in the vicinity of Appomattox Station just before sunset. One of Young's scouts<sup>7</sup> had brought back word that there were four trains of cars at the Station, and Captain Haswell<sup>8</sup> with a squad was sent through the woods, and coming beyond the trains, captured them all.

Almost at the same instant the column trotted up and closed around the cars, which we then ran towards Farmville by their unwilling engineers, when the consideration of a loaded revolver was thrown into the bargain. Then a large number of heavy guns opened on us. Lee's Reserve Artillery had been sent ahead to reach the Station and halt till the army came up, and this was the hornet's nest that we had run into.

As we charged down the road, they filled the air with shell, but as they had no support we soon had them all. Just as we turned off the road to the right, a shell burst in the column killing Woodard's horse and slightly wounding Kingsbury and Hogan. Woodard's horse fell down dead in the road as a fragment of a shell struck him in the head, and when I looked back he was extricating himself from his fallen steed and swinging his arms and shouting to the men not to run over him, for as the column was at a gallop, he was in full as much danger from friends as from enemies. He rejoined the company about midnight riding on a mule.

After going a little distance to the right we came into line and advanced up on the enemy's guns, they replying mostly with cannister while we used pistols and carbines. The forest was very thick and we could see nothing but the flash of the guns. The trees must have been pretty well dug up by the terrible fire. I think we must have advanced within ten rods of

the guns, when the order was given to fall back. Major Cummings gave the order to me and he says that a staff officer gave it to him, but he did not know who the staff officer was.

While fighting in the woods (and in the darkness) our men had become straggled, so that when we fell back and halted we had only a few together and I was sent off to collect them. I took eight men and after going a mile or less came back to where I started from with about forty of our regiment. Not finding the regiment where I left it, I followed up towards the firing, and counting my men, found that I had the same eight men that I started with. Meeting a man coming back at a full trot, we halted him and made him fall in. In the morning I investigated the matter of his (Reuben C. Sherman)<sup>9</sup> coming back, and finding that he had no excuse (and also as it was reported that he had left the column when we were charging at Five Forks) I had the satisfaction of tying him up to a tree for a couple of hours.

As we came out of the woods a little to the right of the road, we came onto a gun which the enemy had just abandoned, and leaving James Abbott in charge, kept on for some distance. We could hear Custer's bugle some distance, but as the shells came down across the road towards us (and behind the column) we concluded to look the matter up. When we approached the road it seemed full of troops, but we could not tell whether they were friends or foes, and upon inquiry were no better off, as they answered "1st Virginia" and we did not know whether it was 1st Virginia Loyal or Rebel.

We finally concluded that it was all right, and then I dismounted some of my men, and we drew our captured gun up into the road where, after a time, we found Colonel Hall, and turned it over to a detail who had five other guns that our regiment had captured. The road was full of wagons that had been captured and sent to the rear and a good many men helped themselves to the contents. I secured a new Rebel artillery cap from a limber, which I now have. About midnight we moved back a mile or so and bivouacked in the woods. I was too tired to wait for supper and went to sleep without any.

The historic 9th of April opened fair; the sun shone bright and all was smiling in nature. The cavalry skirmishers of Crook's Second Division fell slowly back, for Lee had ordered Gordon to brush us out of the road with

his corps of infantry, while Longstreet faced to the rear. As the firing came nearer we mounted up and moved out towards the right. We passed through a brigade of Darkies in line of battle, commanded by a General Foster, I think. Just as we passed through, General Sheridan ordered them to move forward in line and at the same time they threw out a skirmish line at the double quick. The line of battle kept at the ordinary pace, while the skirmish line flew out like a fan, keeping perfect line, and I never saw anything better done on parade.

We saw some of the Fifth Corps on a hill behind us and then the order was given to withdraw the cavalry from in front, and go for the flank and wagon train, while the enemy butted their brains against the infantry if they want to, but they declined the offer. With our regiment in advance led by Generals Custer and Wells, we passed in review between the two armies, marching by squadrons, and we never kept better line on dress parade than we did then, although we were especial marks for two batteries. I think this was the grandest sight I ever saw, and if I was to select a scene for a battle picture (or war painting) I should take the moment when the cavalry was withdrawing from in front of Lee's army and just before the flag came in.

At the head of the column was the gallant Custer, with his golden locks, his broad sombrero turned up from his bronzed face, the ends of his red cravat floating over his shoulders, a pistol in his boot, jangling spurs on his heels, and a ponderous claymore at his side. A little to the right, further down the hill, was General Sheridan and his staff. The shells came thick and fast. Benjamin Clifford of D and Thomas Hyde, one of Colonel Hall's orderlies, being wounded.<sup>10</sup>

Just as we had passed the last picket post between us and the train and the crowd of unarmed men around it, and were just breaking into a gallop, the flag of truce came in. There was some difficulty in halting the advance squadron under Captain Mitchell, who were a little ahead, but it was finally accomplished, and then we moved up in line towards our left and towards some firing occasioned by the notorious General Gary<sup>11</sup> who refused to surrender.

While sitting in line of battle with carbines advanced, Lieutenant Colonel Whittaker of Custer's staff, and two Rebel officers, rode along the line, and Whittaker said, "Lower your carbines, lower your carbines, men,

you will never have to raise them again in this war!" Then we jumped off our horses, threw up our hats, and hurrahed., but I think the demonstration was not so extravagant as might have been expected. A person can experience only about so much joy at one time, and although we were glad that the war was over, and that we might return to our homes, we had no feeling of exultation over our fallen foe, for we remembered that "array of battered uniforms and bright muskets, that body of incomparable infantry, the Army of Northern Virginia, which for four years carried the revolt on its bayonets, opposing a constant front to the mighty concentration of power brought against it, which receiving terrible blows did not fail to give the like, and which vital in all its parts, died only with its annihilation."<sup>12</sup>

The last shot by artillery from the Rebel army was fired at the Second Brigade, Third Division of the Cavalry Corps, then commanded by General William Wells, and I think the last rifle shot was fired at our regiment at this time. We stood to horse all day, as the report was that an armistice was agreed upon till four o'clock in the afternoon, with a view to arrange terms of surrender. Some of our men visited the Rebels opposite, but they did not encourage such visits, as they evidently feared we might discover how weak they were. At four o'clock, hearing nothing about fighting, we unsaddled and camped on the ground where we were. I was sent out with a squad after forage and procured a little after going about eight miles. A hundred thousand men, with horses and mules soon used up all the eatables in the country and as we had been on the jump since March 31st, we did not have much with us. I found a party of stragglers plundering a house, and after arresting one of them and threatening to turn him over to the provost marshal, they concluded to go to their commands.

The next day the whole army moved back in the rain and we were passed by Generals Grant, Sheridan and Ord.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### Closing Scenes, the Grand Review and Muster Out

We camped the night of April 10th at Prospect Station and the next night at Rice's, having passed Prince Edward Court House. The 12th we got some newspapers of the 7th at Burkeville, but we continued on our return by easy marches till the 13th when we went into camp near Nottoway Court House where we remained till the 17th, sending out details for forage and rations, but not getting a great supply. The 15th we were summoned to regimental headquarters by the officers call and were informed of the sad news of President Lincoln's assassination. I remarked that it was a great loss and we could stand it better if we had a better vice president, but most of the officers seemed to have confidence in Johnson. By the light of succeeding events, I think I was nearer right than they.

A good many men from remount camp rejoined us here. The 17th we packed up, and marching along the railroad camped near Fords that night and next day moved to Petersburg where we went into camp early west of the city between the railroad and the river. The 19th some of us got passes to visit Petersburg where such necessary articles as pipes, combs, razors and such as we were in need of could be found. Then we visited the fortifications. On our return we found the stores closed on account of the president's funeral.

The next day we moved camp to Powhattan on the north side of the Appomattox. We remained in this camp till the 24th when we started for North Carolina to help Johnston surrender.

It appears that as soon as the news of Lee's surrender to the Army of the Potomac reached Sherman he communicated it to Johnston and an armistice was agreed upon by them for a short time with a view to surrender. The terms in this "armistice" were very favorable for the Rebels and were disapproved by Secretary Stanton and General Halleck. Sherman justified himself on the grounds that he was afraid that Johnston's army would break up into small bodies who would carry on an endless guerrilla warfare and that he hoped by giving good terms to avoid this. However, it was disapproved and Sherman was ordered to move at the expiration of

the time, and the Sixth Corps and the Cavalry were ordered to proceed to Danville, Virginia so as to be in a good position to assist Sherman.

The route we followed was the Boydton Plank Road which extends from Petersburg in a southwest direction through Dinwiddie Court House to Boydton. Boydton is situated near the North Carolina border and is a little east of Danville. It used to be a very good highway, but as it had not been repaired during the war, the planks were decayed and several of the bridges gone, which caused a short detour at the crossing of the Meherrin River.

On the 25th John Woodard foraged five horses and four mules and General Sheridan took two of them.

The night of the 26th we camped just beyond Boydton and the next day we crossed the Staunton River on a bridge of flat boats (placed end to end) by Young's scouts. We marched about eight miles beyond the river and camped near Clarksburg, which was five miles from the border, and was the nearest to North Carolina that the regiment got during the war. While in this camp an order was issued by which captured horses could be appraised by a board and the officers, if they desired, could buy them at the price named.

I presume that here we received notice of Johnston's surrender, for on the 29th we recrossed the Staunton River at Mosly's Ferry on a pontoon bridge, and after crossing the Danville Railroad went into camp about two miles from the river.

On May 1st we were on the return march, and as we were in Lunenburg County. Major Cummings, Abbott, Church, and myself obtained leave to go to Concord Church and visit John Woodbury's grave. We found the head board down, but it had not been otherwise disturbed, although we had heard of its being dug into to see if any guns had been buried there. We replaced the board, built a rail fence around it, put some sods over it, and planted a rose bush.<sup>1</sup>

On our return to the column, which we rejoined at Black and White's Station, we took along a couple of fox hounds named by their owner "Stonewall" and "Jeff." Ned, Cumming's darkey, led one and the other followed till we were passing a wagon train, when he disappeared. We pre-



sumed that some of the train men had chased him into a wagon. In returning we followed the general direction of the railroad, and passing through Petersburg on the 3rd of May, camped about a mile north of the city on the Richmond Turnpike, where we were joined by Major Adams and Captain Grant.<sup>2</sup>

We remained here till the 10th of May, drilling a little and visiting the city quite often. Early on the 10th we broke camp and started for Washington, passing through the Army of the Tennessee, crossing the James River on a double pontoon bridge. Marching through Richmond with drawn sabres, and camping on the Brook Turnpike about five miles north of the city, near where "Yellow Tavern" used to be.

Next morning we passed over the battlefield of the year before and continued along the Virginia Central Railroad, crossing it east of Louisa Court House. The 13th we received the mail and one days rations, and crossing the Rapidan River at Raccoon Ford, marched via Stevensburg to Kelley's Ford and Catlett's Station. On the 15th we moved through Manassas Junction and Centerville to near Fairfax, where we received some mail and forage, and the next day we marched to the Potomac and went into camp just back of Alexandria. We had marched over ground every inch of which was familiar to us for the last time.

We remained here on the side hill till the 21st of May, making out payrolls, when we went to near Bladensburg, Maryland. We gave Sheridan and Custer hearty cheers as we passed them in Washington. We also saw Colonel Platt.<sup>3</sup> On May 23rd we took part in the Grand Review of the Army of the Potomac by the president and General Grant.

We had reveille at four o'clock in the morning, formed in platoons of twelve files near Capitol Hill, and the column started up Pennsylvania Avenue at nine. While waiting, General Wells received his commission as full brigadier general. We also sent to the Express Office and found our new colors, all safe and sound. Our division had the advance, and after passing the grand stand in front of the president's house we went to a vacant space near the Finley Hospital where General Custer took leave of us and started for Texas, turning the command over to General Capehart.<sup>4</sup>

The next day we went into town and saw the review of Sherman's army. Several commissions arrived, among the others, mine as captain of Company D.

We remained here till the 29th, making out payrolls, issuing clothing, and all those who had any money spent more or less of it in Washington. One officer told me that he had gone through five hundred dollars.

The roads were rather muddy, and for some reason unknown to me, we were unable to get forage enough for the horses, although within five miles of unlimited quantities.

When General Wells received his commission as brigadier general he found that he outranked General Capehart, and on the 29th when we moved back across the river he assumed command of the division and Colonel Pope took command of the brigade.<sup>5</sup> We went out on the Fairfax Pike about four miles and went into camp at Annandale. Here we found plenty of grass for our horses and strawberries for ourselves. I think that a large area of tillage land in this part of Virginia had been benefited by the enforced rest of four years and by the waste and refuse of the armies that had passed over and camped upon it.

While at Annandale I had a horse with a sore back. My colored boy "Elijah" was in the habit of riding him out to graze and water, but for the purpose of having the horse's back heal, I told him not to ride that horse out to graze any more. When he took him out next time, he led him as I desired, but when the company came in he was perched upon his back, grinning like a monkey. Says I, "Didn't I tell you not to ride that horse out to graze again." "Oh yes, Cap'n; told me not to ride him out; didn't say nuffin about ridin' him in."

Some of the men took the opportunity while here to visit their friends and acquaintances at Vienna, Freedom Hill, and Union Church. On June 6th Governor Smith<sup>6</sup> visited the command, and the next day nearly all the Vermont troops were reviewed by him at Bailey's Crossroads, a famous place for reviews in McClellan's time. We borrowed the horses of the 8th New York for our dismounted men and General Wells appeared with the Third Division staff and colors. Everything passed off well and the State of Vermont had reason to feel proud of her soldiers there present. On the 8th we turned over our horses and equipments and that night the other

regiments of the brigade illuminated their camp in our honor. This was entirely unexpected by us, as there had been some rivalry and hard feeling, so we turned out and gave them three cheers.

The next morning we proceeded on foot to Washington over the heights by Fort Albany and across Long Bridge. We took our last look of the Potomac, where "all was quiet" and thought of the comrades we had left on the farther shore. Proceeding by rail to New York, which we reached on Sunday morning, we took a steamer for Troy; here we took cars again, and arrived at Burlington on June 13th, after an absence from the state of three years and six months.

The patriotic citizens received us in good shape and entertained us at the City Hall with refreshments, after which we were quartered at the hospital south of the city. On the 21st a portion of the command was mustered out and the balance consolidated into six companies in accordance with General Orders Number 83 of the Adjutant General's Office dated May 8, 1865.

Colonel Hall was mustered out and Lieutenant Colonel Cummings remained in command of the force left in the service. Two companies were stationed at St. Albans and the other remaining companies at different points in northern New York. On the 9th day of August 1865 these companies were mustered out of the service at Burlington, Vermont. Here the First Vermont Cavalry came into being and here it ceased to exist; here the comrades of nearly four long, weary years of marching and fighting separated, never all to meet again on this earth.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### Final Thoughts

When the command was enlisted no bounties were paid and one may justly claim that all of the organized thousand men who were mustered in on the fairground at Burlington on that ever to be remembered 19th of November 1861, for three years or during the war, enlisted out of pure Patriotism. The special session of the Legislature had authorized the Governor to enlist and organize six regiments of Infantry and to pay the men \$7 per month in addition to the regular \$13 per month from the United States, but as it said nothing about Cavalry we were assured of only the \$13 per month.

It is but just to say that at the next session it was voted to pay us the \$7 and that we received it during the war. The men composing the regiment were of good character and unusual intelligence. There were many college graduates and undergraduates and in the company to which I had the honor to belong there were thirteen school teachers. This is not the kind of material out of which armies are usually recruited, but it was good material.

True we had some officers at first who were of no great account, but this was the result of our method of organization by election, but these were soon weeded out and their places supplied by promotion of deserving men from the ranks. I stood beside the wagon on the 4th of June 1864 when General Custer viewed the remains of the gallant Preston and heard him say "there lies the body of the best colonel in the Cavalry Corps." It would seem to be sure evidence of merit when an officer during the war rising from the rank of first lieutenant to that of Brevet Major General, possessing no political influence, but earning it on the battlefield, as did William Wells.

The original members of this regiment which I suppose includes Companies L and M, who joined us in 1862, numbered 1174. The gain by recruits, transfers and the like during the war was 1123, making the total number of names on the muster rolls to be 2297.

All of these voluntarily entered the service (we had no conscripts), but some of them were substitutes and I presume that we had the usual amount of bounty jumpers.

The loss is as follows:

Transfer to the Veteran Reserve Corps, Navy, and Others:	119
By Promotion to Other Regiments:	7
Killed in Action and Died of Wounds:	134 <sup>1</sup>
Deaths from Disease and Accident:	146
Deaths in Prison:	149
Total by Death:	429
Honorably Discharged:	400
Dishonorably Discharged:	7
Total by Discharge:	407
Deserted	106
Total Loss in Service:	1086
Total Mustered Out:	1211
Total Reenlisted:	171
Total Taken Prisoner:	699

It will be noted that the actual losses of the regiment during the war from casualties and disease incident to war was nearly among the numbers who originally formed the regiment. To illustrate the losses to troops in field service I will mention an incident that happened at Camp Russell in the winter of 1864-65. Requisitions had been put in by the different company commanders for such things as they needed and amongst the rest for a very large amount of ordnance stores. Indeed, there were so many of these called for that the commanding officer off the Corps was surprised at it and ordered a board of officers to investigate and report if as much was actually needed. I was in command of Company D at the time and was requested to make an answer in writing and the reasons I gave were something like these: That since the 5th of May 1864 when active operations began there had been lost from my company by being killed, wound-

ed, and captured the number of fifty-seven (57) men and that (of course) in nearly every case a complete set of equipments had been lost with him and I think the other companies could have made about the same answer, but I think that we averaged to have not over forty (40) who were mounted and present for duty during that period of time.

I have made an estimate of the work done and results accomplished during the existence of the regiment and have arrived at the following results:

Number of Prisoners Captured:	1,000 <sup>2</sup>
Number of Horses from the Enemy:	500
Number of Wagons Captured:	62
Number of Horses Taken from Citizens:	500
Number of Colors Captured:	3
Number of Cannon Captured:	39
Number of Railroad Bridges Burned:	12
Miles of Railroad Torn Up:	10
Number of Contrabands Brought in:	500
Number of Horses Used in All:	5,000
Number Miles Marched by Regimental Headquarters:	4,000
Value of Rebel Property Destroyed/Captured:	more than \$1,000,000

It is evident that if you or I are to be sued for trespassing we shall have quite a bill to pay for actual damage, to say nothing about constructive damage.

The cavalry has been called the "Eyes of the Army." Its especial duty was on the march to take the advance, and when we ran onto the enemy, to find out how many there were of them and prevent the enemy from finding out the same thing about us. Some people, especially the members of that collection of lawyers called the Second Vermont Brigade, are very fond of showing what would have been the result at Gettysburg if they had not been posted so as to assist in the repulse of Pickett's Division when he

surged against the Second Corps at the "High Tide of the Rebellion," showing to their own satisfaction that the cause of the Union would have gone up the spout had it not been for them. I think I have showed that the 1st Vermont Cavalry had quite as much to do with the result at Gettysburg as any other single body of troops of equal size, but to tell the truth, we all had something to do about it.

I have read the histories of the several regiments, the history of the Army of the Potomac, and many others, and I have never been able to find any record of a single regiment in the world that ever captured twenty-three guns on the open field in one day, yet such is our record at Cedar Creek, a record that has gone into history and ought never to be forgotten as long as the English language is spoken on the face of the earth.<sup>3</sup>

Much used to be said and written about the cavalry's foraging, and some men seemed to glory in the name of "Sheridan's Robbers."

I think that this was carried on to its greatest extent on Sheridan's last raid from Winchester to Petersburg. We started out with five days rations (or if we had more than that amount issued, we threw away the balance for no haversacks would hold more than five days rations) with a little sugar, coffee and salt in the wagons, and we were in the enemy's country twenty-one days without communications and of course "lived on the country." Now the phrase "living on the country" means some damage to the same in the best light you can put it. Put six or seven thousand men down into a rather thinly settled region and have them and their horses get all their living for not more than two days within a circle of say five miles in diameter, and they are bound to clear it out pretty clean. At the time mentioned the matter was arranged as systematically as possible. Any enlisted man found away from the column without a pass from a field officer could be dismounted by any officer and his horse taken. All forage parties were to be under the command of a commissioned officer, who was to keep them together and be responsible for their good conduct. He was not to allow them to straggle behind, and I was reprimanded for allowing some men to go ahead of the detachment. Two officers of a New York regiment were dismounted and footed it about one hundred miles for allowing some of their men to remain behind at a house where they were caught stealing something. It was even against orders to cut across corners, although a person might save half a miles travel.

Not much property was destroyed wantonly. The orders were to take what was necessary to sustain life and disturb nothing more. On Kilpatrick's Raid, when Colonel Preston saw a man galloping along ringing a big dinner bell, he rode up to him, and drawing his sabre, knocked it out of the man's hand. Logging chains were not generally thought desirable to confiscate, but occasionally one was carried a short distance and then dropped. Good horses were always in demand and when a man was dismounted one or two hundred miles from home (as you might say) it was quite an object to get a remount and the footman often got away from the column several miles looking for them.

Bacon, sorghum, molasses, flour, corn, and persimmon beer (as one man called applejack) were in the greatest demand. Potatoes were not refused and no doubt watches and jewelry were sometimes taken, but not often. I never heard of an instance in my company. It was generally the worst characters that became dismounted. A good soldier would nurse his horse or go on foot several miles, and load light so as to save his horse, while a bad soldier will sit on his poor animal till it falls down in the road and never so much as cast overboard a frying pan or a stolen ham to lighten ship and get his craft into port. Then he goes off on the flank and plunders. "Pity 'tis, 'tis true," but you cannot expect all the virtues for \$13 a month. Perhaps after the cavalry has passed, along comes the infantry and their "Bummers" spread out over the country for the same purpose of plunder, and finding none, join in the wail of the citizens and curse the cavalry.

I find that the result of an encounter is not always viewed in the same light by both parties, for instance in the little fight we had with Harry Gilmore's command at Luray Court House on the 30th of June 1862, I cannot understand his recollections. As I looked at it, our advance on the town surprised and chased him up the hill along a road to the southwest, captured several prisoners from him, stayed as long as we wanted to, having exceeded our orders, and then returned to camp. But on reading Harry Gilmore's *Four Years in the Saddle*<sup>4</sup> I find that I have made a great mistake. His account reads as follows:

"Four companies were now sent to me, making six in all, with orders to me to take permanent command of the post. On arriving in Luray, I inquired of Captain Coyner where the pickets were,



and was told they were down at Rileysville, which is ten miles below Luray. Knowing this to be plenty of margin, I camped in a meadow, trusting entirely to Coyner's pickets. We were all very tired, and slept well.

The next morning the pickets, who it seems were only three miles below instead of ten, came dashing in, and reported the enemy pushing on with a large force of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. The wagons were quickly loaded up and sent on to the White House Ford, and the men had only time to form in the town, when the enemy's cavalry came in sight, driving in a small force sent forward by me to check their advance in order to gain time. The wagons were moving out at one end of the town as the enemy appeared at the other.

I had disposed my force so as to have the fight in the town, but the citizens came and begged me to move out of the streets; so we drew up a hundred yards off, on the turnpike, leaving Lieutenant Welch in town with the rear guard.

I had scarcely taken my position before the enemy selected one commanding mine, and prepared to open with two guns, which compelled me to fall back. While retreating we heard shouting and firing, evidently from the rear guard; and the next moment Welch came in headlong, closely pursued by three or four hundred cavalry. They were already in sight of our wagons, and I knew there was no alternative but a hard fight or loss of the wagons, besides having my men cut to pieces in the Shenandoah River. I prepared to fight, and immediately wheeled the column, and gave the command to charge. This threw my own company in front, and never did men behave better. Both columns were at a charge and as we closed upon each other, I, being some distance ahead of the rest, happened to kill one of the first set of fours at a second shot. When he fell their column broke, but, instead of falling back, they at once flanked out to the right and left, supposing that we would keep the road and on to the town, when they would be able to close in upon our flanks and rear, and thus completely surround us. I was not to be caught in this trap, so I at once gave the order, 'Flank out to the right and left,' Welch taking the right and I the left. Some six or seven men followed me across a field,

on the far side of which was a fence, and just beyond this a thick growth of scrub oaks high enough to conceal a man on horseback. I had reached the fence and was about to cross, when suddenly five or six blue-coats appeared within twenty yards of me, and one of them cried out, 'Here they are, captain;' whereupon the captain galloped up to his men and shouted, 'Why in the hell don't you fire?' They all blazed away, but fortunately missed me. To retreat now would be fatal; so I took deliberate aim at the captain, but only the cap exploded. They all fired again, and again missed. I took another deliberate aim at the captain, fired, and he reeled in his saddle—my ball took effect in his breast. Kemp also fired in the next moment as he was falling, and sent a ball through his head. The few men with me now closed up, and we attempted a charge, but came very near getting surrounded, and had to fall back. Here we lost a man taken prisoner—a Baltimorean named Fitzpatrick.

Satisfied now that we must retreat, instead of following the wagons we turned off to Columbia Bridge, seven miles above White House Ford, and scattered into the woods, checking them a good deal. When the enemy charged upon us we killed two of them and one of their horses, and here I lost a fine boy named Kidd, taken prisoner. I kept my own company well in the rear, and succeeded in checking the enemy completely until the rest of my command crossed the Shenandoah at Scrabble Town.

In this fight we numbered only one hundred and eighty men, while the enemy had more than four hundred cavalry alone—the 1st Vermont and 6th Ohio. We lost two men, taken prisoners, with their horses and arms; we captured one horse, killed five men, and wounded six.

That night I took two men with me well mounted, recrossed the river, and scouted cautiously into Luray, where we took supper. It was then I learned the number of Federal wounded, they having pressed the carriages to take them off."<sup>5</sup>

It is proper at this time for us to remember our dead comrades, forgetting their faults, if they had any, and remembering their virtues.

Of course, it is impossible to mention all of the more than four hundred who either on the "Stricken Field" or of wounds or disease incident to the service, "Died that the Country might live," and made the ultimate sacrifice possible, that of life itself, but some of them we can recall.

We all remember the rash and impulsive Preston, who never asked men to go where he was not willing to lead, and who finally met his doom on the bloody field of Cold Harbor in advance of his men.

The chivalrous Pitkin, who failing in his expectations of promotion, did not leave the service when his country needed every man, but enlisting in the ranks, received the wound which caused his death.

The true soldier and Patriot Cushman, who although so strangely and severely wounded at Gettysburg through the face as would cause most men to think they were disabled for life, returned to his command and met his fate at the same manner and place as Colonel Preston.

The unassuming, but brave Lieutenant Hall, killed at Nottoway in the twenty-four hours fight with W. H. F. Lee's cavalry.

The self-made Captain Ray, killed in front at Tom's Brook on October 9th, 1864.

The true Patriot Captain Perkins "killed in action" on September 22nd, 1862.

The young and brilliant Captain Flint, who although rash, paid the penalty with his life and fell with six bullets through his body.

And Captain Woodward, fresh from his books, bound to distinguish himself or die at the head of his command, did both at Hagerstown when Kilpatrick made his insane attempt to stop Lee's whole army.

And Woodbury, the best dressed man in the regiment, his last words were "rally men, rally men, there are only a few of them" and, turning to meet the enemy, fell shot through the brain.

And Steward, cool and steadfast, mortally wounded at Stony Creek Station.

And Williamson, quiet and unassuming, wounded at Malvern Hill on June 15th, 1864, and dying five days later in the hospital at Fortress Monroe.

At let us not forget those others who perhaps in a humbler state gave their all:

A—there were Mattocks and Lynde

B—Beeman and Jenne

C—Heath and Pope

D—and John Chase, the first man killed in action from the regiment, and Meacham and Woodbury.

E—Wentworth, Everest and Goold

F—and Brigham and Bartleff

G—and Crumb and Wickwire

H—and Corey and Bucklin

I—and Walker and Burr

K—and Galvin and Wilson

L—and Duncan and Waller and Sperry and Brownell

M—and Demaro and many others whose blood has mingled with the sacred soil from Mount Jackson down the long roll of seventy-three battles to Appomattox.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Killed and Mortally Wounded Soldiers of the First Vermont Cavalry.**

Burial information has been obtained from the Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers, for those soldiers buried in National Cemeteries, and from the Vermont Vital Records located in Middlesex, Vermont, to locate soldiers reburied in Vermont. Vermont town clerks filed death notices with burial locations for soldiers who died out of state when the soldier was reburied in Vermont. They did not notate the records when a soldier died out of state and was buried outside Vermont.

I have included those men missing in action and indicate whether I think them to be probable casualties or possible deserters.

Soldiers wounded and captured who died in prison are included, even those who might have died of disease rather than their wounds. I include information from other sources, particularly the Andersonville diary of Sergeant George R. Crosby of Company F, to indicate that these men might have died as a result of their wounds.

Unknown burial indicates that there is no information concerning a marked grave either in Vermont or in a National Cemetery for a soldier verified as killed or died of wounds.

None of the soldiers listed as missing have any burial information in any of the sources consulted. I indicate "no burial information" with their names.

It is very possible that some of the soldiers who I list as "unknown burial" are buried in Vermont, but whose burial was not notated by a town clerk. I located Sergeant Orris Beeman's grave in Fairfax by accident while walking my dog. Beeman was killed at Gettysburg and his body was returned home without the Fairfax town clerk annotating the town's vital records.

1862:

McGaheysville, Va., April 27, 1862

John D. Chase, corporal Company D, died of wounds on April 28, 1862, age 36, married, from Danville, son of Loren and Eliza Chase, buried Green Cemetery, Danville, Vermont.

Near Woodstock, Va., May 20, 1862

Mason Hebbard, Company H, killed in action, age 24, from Wallingford, unknown burial. (G.G. Benedict lists him as a May 24th casualty.) Mason Bingham Hibbard, son of widow Francis Hibbard, baptized on June 5, 1845 in Wallingford (Vermont Vital Records).

Middletown, Va., May 24, 1862

Ralph Merrill, Company D, killed in action, age 18, no town listed, real name Ralph W. Straw, unknown burial.

Henry Lynde, Company A, killed in action, age 40, from Burlington, unknown burial.

Daniel Wilson, Company K, killed in action, age 21, from Middlebury, buried Central Cemetery, Middlebury, Vermont.

James Holden, Company H, died of wounds on May 26, 1862, age 23, from Clarendon, unknown burial.

Lucius Shonion, Company A, missing in action, supposed killed, age 23, from South Hero, unknown burial. Either he or parents probably born in Canada.

Winchester, Va., May 25, 1862

Ashbel Meacham, corporal Company D, killed in action, age 20, from Guildhall, buried in Winchester National Cemetery, Virginia.

George Dodge, Company E, killed in action, age 24, from Royalton, buried in Havens Cemetery, Royalton, Vermont.

Luray Court House, Va., July 2, 1862

Joseph W. Gordon, Company D, killed in action, no age listed, from Chelsea, buried in Winchester National Cemetery, Virginia.

Kelley's Ford, Va., August 22, 1862

Brainard E. Walker, Company I, killed in action, age 27, from Hardwick, son of Calvin Walker, buried Center Cemetery, Hardwick, Vermont.

Waterloo Bridge, Va., August 22, 1862

Daniel C. Dana, Company E, killed in action, age 19, from Pomfret, unknown burial.

Ashby's Gap, Va., September 22, 1862

Selah Perkins, captain Company K, killed in action, age 36, from Castleton, a physician, son of Joseph and Mary G. Perkins, buried Castleton, Vermont.

Missing:

Thomas Howley, Company H, wounded and sent to General Hospital on September 6, 1862 (Revised Roster) or sick since September 1, 1864 (Adjutant General's Report for 1864); possible deserter. From Mayo County, Ireland, son of Michael and Bridget Howley, married Ann Heeman on June 6, 1861, no burial information.

Totals for 1862: 13, plus 1 missing

Company Totals A:2, B:0, C:0, D:4, E:2, F:0, G:0, H:2 (plus 1 missing), I:1, K:2.

1863:

Broad Run, Va. (Miskell Farm), April 1, 1863

Henry Flint, captain Company I, killed in action, age 22, from Irasburg, buried Irasburg, Vermont.

Charles Woodbury, first lieutenant Company B, killed in action, age 25, from Hyde Park, buried Craftsbury Common, Vermont.

John Reed, Company I, killed in action, age 44, from Albany, unknown burial.

John N. Frost, Company I, killed in action, age 19, from Sutton, son of Charles and Almira Frost, buried in Sutton, Vermont.

- Horace Bradley, Company A, died of wounds on April 2, 1863, age 21, from Richmond, unknown burial.
- Abel H. Coburn, Company B, died of wounds on April 2, 1863, age 35, from Berkshire, unknown burial.
- George S. Woodward, Company C, died of wounds on April 2, 1863, age 22, from Waterbury, unknown burial.
- John E. Morton, Company C, died of wounds on April 3, 1863, age 18, from Randolph, son of John and Polly Richmond Morton, "killed by a Rebel's bullet," buried Randolph, Vermont.

Greenwich, Va., May 30, 1863

- Job Corey, sergeant Company H, killed in action, age 22, from Tinmouth, buried in Little Village Cemetery, Danby, Vermont.

Gettysburg, Pa., July 3, 1863

- Ezra S. Doty, Company A, killed in action, age 21, from Huntington, unknown burial.
- Orris Beeman, commissary sergeant Company B, killed in action, age 20, from Fairfax, buried Old Fairfax Cemetery, Fairfax, Vermont. Son of Hubbard and Rhoda Beeman.
- Joel J. Smith, Company C, killed in action, age 33, from Duxbury, buried South Duxbury Cemetery, Duxbury, Vermont. Headstone in Gettysburg National Cemetery, Vermont Plot B-21.
- Tertullus C. Ward, Company C, killed in action, age 26, from Middlesex, unknown burial (Vermont Plot A-18, Gettysburg National Cemetery as Corporal Warren ?)
- Sylvanus Lund, Company D, killed in action, age 28, from Grotton, unknown burial.
- Franklin Gould, Company E, killed in action, age 26, from Springfield, born August 24, 1833, buried Summer Hill Cemetery, Springfield, Vermont.
- Lorin M. Brigham, Company F, killed in action, age 19, from Barnet, unknown burial.
- Henry Worthen, wagoner Company H, killed in action, age 24, from Rutland, born in Clarendon, single, death cited in Rutland Vital Records, but no burial information.



- Joseph Buffum, Company H, killed in action, age 30, from Mount Tabor, son of Cyrus and Cynthia Buffum, buried Barton Cemetery, Mount Tabor, Vermont.
- George D. Bucklin, sergeant Company H, killed in action, age 21, from Wallingford, son of Darius and Mary E. Griswold Bucklin, "a brave and gallant soldier and true patriot," buried in Sugar Hill Cemetery, Wallingford, Vermont.
- John Sulham, Company H, killed in action, age 46, from Fairfield, unknown burial.
- George H. Duncan, sergeant Company L, killed in action, age 21, from Colchester, son of G. M. and A. M. Duncan, buried Green Mount Cemetery, Burlington, Vermont.
- George Brownell, Company L, killed in action, age 20, from Colchester, buried Colchester, Vermont.
- Rufus D. Thompson, Company L, died of wounds on July 6, 1863, age 18, from Colchester, buried Gettysburg National Cemetery, Vermont Plot B-19.
- Ira E. Sperry, corporal Company L, died of wounds on July 22, 1863, age 23, from St. Albans, buried Gettysburg National Cemetery, Vermont Plot A-26.
- Charles Cowley, Company H, missing in action July 3, 1863, (Revised Roster lists him discharged on August 3, 1863, Special Orders of the War Department), age 19, from St. Albans, buried Gettysburg National Cemetery, Vermont Plot B-20 as Charles Corley.

Hagerstown, Md., July 6, 1863

- Wesley Watts, Company E, killed in action, age 18, from Royalton, buried Antietam National Cemetery, Maryland.
- John Galvin, Company K, killed in action, age 18, from Middlebury, buried Catholic Cemetery, Middlebury, Vermont.
- John Woodward, captain Company M, killed in action, age 23, from Burlington, buried Jeffersonville, Vermont.
- Homer E. Bliss, Company A, died of wounds on August 7, 1863, age 20, from Milton, buried in Georgia Plains Cemetery, Georgia, Vermont.
- Jarvis Wentworth, Company E, died of wounds on July 17, 1863, age 44, from Tunbridge, married Nancy Fifield on December 7, 1848 at Chelsea, Vermont, buried in Branchview Cemetery, Royalton, Vermont.

George W. Everest, sergeant, Company E, died of wounds on July 14, 1863, age 18, no home listed, buried Antietam National Cemetery, Maryland.

Orvis F. Kimball, Company E, died of wounds on July 15, 1863, age 21, from Bethel, unknown burial.

George B. Roundy, Company F, died of wounds as prisoner of war in Richmond, Va. on October 19, 1863, age 20, from Grafton, buried in Old Town Cemetery, Rockingham, Vermont.

Boonsboro, Md., July 8, 1863

Oramel Morse, Company E, killed in action, age 25, from Pomfret, unknown burial.

Hiram L. Walker, corporal Company L, killed in action, age 30, from Georgia, buried Walker Cemetery, Georgia, Vermont.

Hagerstown, Md., July 13, 1863

James Scott Merritt, Company L, died of wounds on July 19, 1863, age 22, from Georgia, buried Evarts Cemetery, Georgia, Vermont.

August 16, 1863

William Dutton, saddler Company I, died of wounds on August 16, 1863, date wounded not stated, age 29, from Hyde Park, unknown burial.

Culpeper Court House, Va., September 13, 1863

John Henry, Company B, killed in action, age 30, from Essex, New York, unknown burial.

On Picket near Hartwood Church, Va., September 26, 1863

William Jure, Company L, killed in action, age 45, married Harriet Learned on July 5, 1841 at Burlington (children Calvin died 1843 aged 9 months, Socrates died 1847 aged 1½ years, William died 1858 aged 2 years), unknown burial.

Brandy Station, Va., October 11, 1863

Daniel F. Wilder, commissary sergeant Company B, died of wounds in Washington, D. C. on December 24, 1863, age 23, from Sheldon, buried in Sheldon, Vermont.

Jason A. Stone, sergeant Company F, died of wounds as paroled prisoner of war at Richmond, Va. on November 28, 1863, age 35, from Wilmington, unknown burial.

Hiram B. Johnson, corporal Company B, missing in action on October 11, 1863, age 22, from St. Albans (Revised Roster), son of H.I. and L.J. Johnson, born July 21, 1839. Killed in action, headstone in Old Fairfax Cemetery, Fairfax, Vermont says missing in action (probably cenotaph.)

John Cantell, Company H, missing in action on October 11, 1863, age 18, from Berkshire, no further record, probably killed in action, no burial information.

Total for 1863: 42, plus 1 probably killed.

Company Totals: A:3, B:5, C:4, D:1, E:6, F:3, G:0, H:7 (plus 1 probably killed), I:4, K:1, L:7, M:1.

Running Totals: A:5, B:5, C:4, D:5, E:8, F:3, G:0, H:9 (plus 1 missing and 1 probably killed), I:5, K:3, L:7, M:1.

#### 1864:

Mechanicsville, Va., March 1, 1864

David Pierce, Company K, killed in action, age 20, from East Montpelier, unknown burial.

Piping Tree, Va., March 2, 1864

Hubbard J. Eastman, Company F, died of wounds on September 19, 1864, age 21, from Rockingham, buried Burgess Cemetery, Grafton, Vermont.

Frank R. Tremble, Company K, died of wounds as prisoner of war in Richmond, Va. on March 18, 1864, age 28, from Bridport, buried Richmond National Cemetery, Virginia.

Elmer J. Leonard, Company K, died of wounds as a prisoner of war at Richmond, Va, on March 7, 1864, age 19, from Rochester, unknown burial.

Skirmish, March 9, 1864

John Henry Burnett, Company G, died of wounds on September 2, 1864, age 21, from Rockingham, buried in Hampton, Virginia.

Craig's Meeting House (Wilderness), Va., May 5, 1864

Parker Cole, Company C, killed in action, age 21, from Plainfield, unknown burial.

John Q. French, Company E, killed in action, age 19, from Cavendish, unknown burial.

Horace Hall, Company E, killed in action, age 20, from Barnard, unknown burial.

George W. Hemenway, Company I, killed in action, age 18, from Craftsbury, unknown burial.

Ebenezer Blongy, Company A, died of wounds as prisoner of war at Richmond, Va. on May 24, 1864, age 18, from Burlington, unknown burial.

Albert Taylor, Company A, died of wounds on May 6, 1864, age 22, from Burlington, unknown burial.

Clarence E. Cushman, Company E, died of wounds on May 8, 1864, age 18, from Hartland, unknown burial.

Cyrus Tuttle, Company F, died as prisoner of war at Andersonville, Ga. on July 22, 1864 (diarrhea), age 33, from Andover, "badly wounded in the arm above the elbow" (George R. Crosby, Company F, "Diary"), buried Andersonville National Cemetery.

Joseph A. Brainerd, corporal Company L, died prisoner of war at Andersonville, Ga. on August 16, 1864 (scorbutus), age 28, from St. Albans, "Brainard was badly wounded through the groin" (Crosby diary), unknown burial at Andersonville.

Joseph P. Brainerd, Company L, died prisoner of war at Andersonville, Ga. on September 12, 1864 (scorbutus), age 22, from St. Albans, "was there mortally wounded through the breast" (Crosby diary), buried Andersonville National Cemetery.

James Little, Company L, died prisoner of war at Florence, S.C. on November 7, 1864, age 21, from Charlotte, "Little... was lef[t] there badly wounded through the shoulder" (Crosby diary), unknown burial.

Yellow Tavern, Va., May 11, 1864

Michael Phillips, Company L, killed in action, age 20, from Jericho, unknown burial.

Herbert A. Garvin, Company L, killed in action, age 18, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

Meadow Bridge, Va., May 12, 1864

Azra P. Noyes, Company H, killed in action, age 21, from Chittenden, son of Daniel and Louisa Noyes, buried S.S. Baird Cemetery, Chittenden, Vermont.

George A. Pine, Company E, died of wounds on June 13, 1864, age 18, from Williston, buried East Cemetery, Williston, Vermont.

Hazen Gott, Company H, died of wounds as prisoner of war in Richmond, Va. on May 22, 1864, age 18, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

Malverton R. Claflin, Company H, died of wounds as prisoner of war in Richmond, Va. on May 21, 1864, age 21, from Hancock, buried Richmond National Cemetery, Virginia.

James W. Hillock, Company L, died of wounds on May 17, 1864, age 18, from Colchester, unknown burial.

Skirmish May 30, 1864 (with 2nd Corps escort)

Joseph Demaro, Company M, killed in action, age 21, from Barton, buried Yorktown National Cemetery, Virginia.

Ashland, Va., June 1, 1864

Thomas E. Bartleff, first sergeant Company F, died of wounds on June 1, 1864, age 25, from Brattleboro, unknown burial.

William T. Carswell, Company F, died of wounds as prisoner of war on August 1, 1864, age 22, from Danville, unknown burial.

George W. Haskell, Company F, died of wounds on August 1, 1864, age 22, from Andover, buried Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

Herbert S. Pierce, Company F, wounded and missing in action on June 1, 1864, age 18, from Guilford, (Revised Roster), died of wounds on June 2, 1864, buried Christ Church Cemetery, Guilford, Vermont.

Cassius M. Stickney, Company F, died of wounds as a prisoner of war at Richmond, Va. on July 20, 1864, age 20, from Chester, a blacksmith, son of George W. and Roxalane Stickney, born April 12, 1843, married Rosalia Peabody on December 25, 1863 at Andover, buried Middletown Cemetery, Andover, Vermont.

Amos Frank Smith, Company F, died of wounds on July 13, 1864, age 22, from Guilford, buried hospital cemetery, New Haven, Connecticut.

Haw's Shop, Va., June 3, 1864

Addison Preston, colonel, killed in action, age 30, Danville, buried in Danville, Vermont.

Oliver T. Cushman, captain Company E, killed in action, age 20, from Hartland, buried in Hartland, Vermont.

George McIvor, Company H, killed in action, age 21, from Chittenden, unknown burial.

Hiram P. Danforth, Company D, died of wounds on August 1, 1864, age 19, from Danville, unknown burial.

Eusebe Sansouci, Company L, died of wounds on June 10, 1864, age 38, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

White Oak Swamp, Va., June 13, 1864

Martin Heath, sergeant Company C, killed in action, age 20, from Northfield, unknown burial.

John Owens, Company E, died of wounds on July 23, 1864, age 23, from Rutland, buried hospital cemetery, Cyprus Hill, New York.

Malvern Hill, Va., June 15, 1864

John Williamson, first lieutenant Company K, died of wounds on June 20, 1864, age 23, from Malone, New York, buried in Malone, New York.

Ream's Station, Va., June 22, 1864

Ichabod W. Mattocks, sergeant Company A, died of wounds on July 15, 1864, age 19, from Williston, son of Ichabod and Ann Mattocks, buried in Williston, Vermont.

## Nottoway Court House, Va., June 23, 1864

Hiram H. Hall, captain Company E, killed in action, age 25, from Williston, buried in Williston, Vermont.

Hannibal S. Jenne, sergeant Company B, killed in action, age 20, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

Wesley Dodge, Company C, died of wounds as a prisoner of war on June 24, 1864, age 21, from Barre, son of Joseph and Lorinda Dodge, buried Wilson Cemetery, Barre, Vermont (perhaps cenotaph.)

John W. Woodbury, sergeant Company D, died of wounds on June 24, 1864, age 18, from Concord, born December 9, 1842, son of Rufus and Amanda Woodbury, buried in Concord, Vermont.

Israel Demars, Company E, died of wounds on July 2, 1864, age 19, from Williston, unknown burial.

Ephraim H. Brewster, Company I, died of wounds on December 5, 1864 at Camp Parole, Md., age 19, from Craftsbury, buried St. John's College Cemetery, Annapolis, Maryland.

William W. Pond, Company K, died of wounds as a prisoner of war on June 29, 1864, age 21, from Newfane, unknown burial.

## Stony Creek, Va., June 28 &amp; 29, 1864

Daniel H. Perham, Company F, killed in action on June 29, age 18, from Grafton, unknown burial.

Adoniram J. Burr, Company I, killed in action on June 29, age 21, from Derby, unknown burial.

Reuben C. Pearson, Company I, killed in action on June 29, age 21, from Coventry, unknown burial.

Gilbert Steward, first lieutenant Company G, wounded on June 28, died of wounds on June 29, 1864, age 23, from Clarendon, unknown burial.

William McNeal, Company E, wounded on June 28 and died of wounds on August 5, 1864, age 29, from Milton, unknown burial.

Charles W. Bishop, sergeant Company E, wounded on June 28 and died of wounds on July 22, 1864, age 18, from Ludlow, buried Hampton, Virginia.

Lewis Green, Company A, wounded on June 29 and died of wounds as a prisoner of war on July 23, 1864 at Salisbury,

North Carolina, age 26, from Richmond, buried Salisbury National Cemetery, North Carolina.

Walter W. Kingston, Company C, wounded on June 29 and died of wounds as a prisoner of war on November 14, 1864 at Charleston, South Carolina. (amputation of leg), age 22, from Chester, buried Charleston, South Carolina.

Ransom T. Fay, Company E, wounded on June 29 and died of wounds as a prisoner of war before July 8, 1864 (Charles Chapin "Diary"), age 19, from Williston, unknown burial.

Wilson's Raid, Va., June 30, 1864

Addison Harris, Company H, missing in action on June 30, no further record, probable killed in action, age 21, from Lemington, no burial information.

Kerneysville, Va., August 25, 1864

Edgar E. Wright, Company A, killed in action, age 26, from Jericho, a farmer, son of Norman and Mehitable Wright, married Lydia Rodgers on March 30, 1858, unknown burial.

Harmon D. Hull, sergeant Company B, died of wounds on August 25, 1864, age 20, from Fairfield, unknown burial.

Edward King, Jr., Company B, died of wounds on September 12, 1864, age 18, from Enosburg, son of Edward King and Margaret Brusso, unknown burial.

William H. Day, Company H, died of wounds on August 25, 1864, age 18, from Rutland, buried Antietam National Cemetery, Maryland.

September 14, 1864

Benjamin Barrett, Company F, died of wounds on September 14, 1864, date of wound not stated, age 44, from Hardwick, buried hospital cemetery, Cyprus Hill, New York.

Winchester, Va., September 19, 1864

Bertrand D. Campbell, Company C, killed in action, no age listed, from Barton, born January 22, 1844, son of J.S. and Fanny A. Campbell, buried Meadow Cemetery, Waitsfield, Vermont.



Gooney Manor Grade, Va., September 21, 1864

Edwin Clemons, Company F, killed in action, age 19, from Wells, unknown burial.

Shenandoah Valley, Va., October 6, 1864

Thomas Ralph, Company A, died of wounds on October 7, 1864, age 21, from Shelburne, buried hospital cemetery, Cyprus Hill, New York. (Death date probably wrong.)

Columbia Furnace, Va., October 7, 1864

Edwin R. Jones, Company C, died of wounds as a prisoner on October 7, 1864, age 20, from Middlesex, unknown burial.

Joseph N. Wright, Company C, died of wounds as a prisoner on October 31, 1864, age 33, from Northfield, a carpenter, son of John and Polly Wright, second marriage to Rosina Wilson on January 2, 1859, buried Northfield, Vermont. (Death date of November 16, 1865 in Vital Records is probably internment date.)

Joseph Champlain, Company E, missing in action on October 7, 1864, no further record, probably killed in action, age 35, from Burlington, no burial information.

Henry F. Buchman, Company E, missing in action on October 7, 1864, no further record, probably killed in action, age 26, from Barnard, no burial information.

Shenandoah Valley, Va., October 8, 1864

James Lowell, Company I, killed in action (G. G. Benedict says on October 9), age 26, from Greensboro, unknown burial.

Charles D. Harvey, corporal Company L, died of wounds as a prisoner on December 13, 1864, age 27, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

Tom's Brook, Va., October 9, 1864

Frank Ray, captain Company G, killed in action, age 23, from Bennington, buried Bennington Centre Cemetery, Bennington, Vermont.

Carlos Hodgdon, Company L, killed in action, age 40, from Wheelock, unknown burial.

Middle Road, Va., November 11, 1864

Michael Donovan, Company H, killed in action, age 22, from Rutland, unknown burial.

Middletown, Va., November 12, 1864

Paul Dumas, Company L, killed in action, age 28, from St. Albans, buried Winchester National Cemetery, Virginia.

Andrew E. Miller, Company B, died of wounds on November 15, 1864, age 20, from St. Albans, unknown burial.

Patrick Cole, Company B, missing in action on November 12, no further record, no age or home listed, possible deserter, no burial information.

John Jake, Company B, missing in action on November 12, no further record, no age or home listed, possible deserter, no burial information.

Walter Thompson, Company B, missing in action on November 12, no further record, age 29, from Stockbridge, possible deserter, no burial information.

John Robinson, Company B, missing in action, date not stated in 1864, no further record, no age, was a substitute, possible deserter, no burial information.

Total for 1864: 64, plus 3 missing in action, probably killed in action, 9 wounded prisoners who might have died of wounds, and 4 missing in action, possible deserters.

Company Totals: A:5, B:4, C:7, D:2, E:10, F:9, G:3, H:6, I:5, K:5, L:6, M: 1, Field Officer: 1.

Probable KIA: E:2, H:1

Wounded Prisoners: A:1, D:1, F:3, L:4

MIA, Possible Deserters: B:4

Running Totals, A:10 (plus 1 wounded prisoner), B:9 (plus 4 missing), C:11, D:7 (plus 1 wounded prisoner), E: 18 (plus 2 probably killed), F:12 (plus 3 wounded prisoners), G:3, H:15 (plus 1 missing and 2 probably killed), I:10, K:8, L:13 (plus 4 wounded prisoners), M:2, Field Officer: 1.

1865:

Waynesboro, Va., March 2, 1865

Asa M. Benway, Company A, killed in action, age 30, from Hartland, unknown burial.

Sheridan's Raid, Va., March 12, 1865

Joseph Jordon, Company C, missing in action, probably killed in action, age 21, from Sharon, no burial information.

Namozine Church, Va., April 3, 1865

Andrew Calderwood, Company I, killed in action, age 20, from Greensboro, unknown burial.

Willis Lyman, Company L, killed in action, age 18, from Williston, unknown burial.

Appomattax Station, Va., April 8, 1865

George B. Dunn, Company M, killed in action, age 18, from Georgia, buried in Sanderson Corner Cemetery, Fairfax, Vermont.

1865 Totals: 4 plus 1 missing (probably KIA)

Company Totals: A:1, C:1, L:1, M:1

Probable Killed: C:1

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Grand Total: A:11 (plus 1 wounded prisoner), B:9 (plus 4 missing), C:12 (plus 1 probably killed), D:7 (plus 1 wounded prisoner), E:18 (plus 2 probably killed), F:12 (plus 3 wounded prisoners), G:3, H:15 (plus 1 missing and 2 probably killed), I:10, K:8, L:14 (plus 4 wounded prisoners), M:3, Field Officer: 1.

TOTAL: 142

Confirmed killed in action: 123

Probably killed in action: 5

Wounded Prisoners who died: 9

Missing, Possibly Deserters: 5

Total of all possible deaths in action: 142

## ENDNOTES

### Preface

<sup>1</sup> Daniel M. Russell, Pension Records, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. In possession of the editor.

<sup>2</sup> H. K. Ide to William Wells, March 17, 1872, William Wells Papers, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. Hereafter cited as Wells Papers.

<sup>3</sup> S. H. Wood, compiler, *Roster of Survivors of the First Regiment Vermont Cavalry With a Brief Historical Sketch of the Regiment*, (n.p., 1902), 44.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> William Wells to his mother, 10 December 1863, Wells Papers.

### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Heros von Borcke, the Prussian mercenary who joined J. E. B. Stuart in 1862, and after returning to Prussia in 1864, wrote articles for *Blackwoods Magazine* in 1866. He published his entire memoirs as *Memoirs of the Confederate War* in 1866, as well. Ide points out von Borcke's all too evident ego.

George Brinton McClellan (1826–1885) USMA 1846, commanded the Army of the Potomac until November 7, 1862 and had little use for his cavalry, employing it in small brigades attached to corps headquarters. Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, (Baton Rouge, 1964), 290–292.

George Stoneman (1822–1894) USMA 1846, chief of cavalry of the Army of the Potomac in 1861, commanded a Third Corps division in 1862, and made chief of cavalry again under Joseph Hooker in 1863. In 1864 was commander of the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Ohio until captured on July 31, 1864. Warner, 481–482.

Philip St. George Cooke (1809–1895) USMA 1827, a loyal Virginian, perhaps best known as the father-in-law of J. E. B. Stuart. He commanded the Regular cavalry brigade on the Peninsula, but spent the rest of the war well in the rear. Warner, 89–90.

William Woods Averell (1832–1900) USMA 1855, colonel of the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry in the fall of 1862 and commanded the Second Cavalry Division in the spring of 1863 and under Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864. Warner, 12–13.

<sup>2</sup> Elements of Charles Whiting's and Longstreet's troops repulsed the five companies of the 5th U.S. Cavalry that made the charge. Stephen W. Sears, *To the Gates of Richmond*, (New York, 1992), 244–245.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Pleasonton (1824–1897) USMA 1844, commanded a cavalry division during the Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville campaigns. He commanded the Cavalry Corps from June 1863 to March 1864 and later fought in Missouri. Warner, 373–374.

<sup>4</sup> George Dashiell Bayard (1835–1862) USMA 1856, was killed by an artillery shot while commanding a cavalry brigade on Burnside's left flank. Warner, 26.

<sup>5</sup> John Buford (1826–1863) USMA 1848, commanded the First Cavalry Division at Gettysburg and until his death from typhoid fever in December 1863. Warner, 52–53.

David McMurtrie Gregg (1833–1916) USMA 1855, commanded the Second Cavalry Division from 1863 to February 1865. Warner, 187–188.

<sup>6</sup> General Joseph hooker could have found 866 cavalry casualties at Brandy Station. See Fairfax Downey, *Clash of Cavalry*, (New York, 1959), 144. Almost half of these men were captured.

<sup>7</sup> Ide clearly overstates the results of these battles. Although not particularly successful on the battlefields, Stuart certainly was not bottled up in the Shenandoah Valley and inflicted serious losses on parts of Pleasonton's forces. Robert F. O'Neill, Jr., *The Cavalry Battles of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville*, (Lynchburg, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> Elon Farnsworth commanded the First Brigade, which contained the 1st Vermont Cavalry. Farnsworth, George Armstrong Custer, and Wesley Merritt all received promotions from captain to brigadier general of volunteers in order to provide the Cavalry Corps with young, dynamic leaders. Hugh Judson Kilpatrick commanded the Third Cavalry Division, made up of Farnsworth's and Custer's brigades.

<sup>9</sup> William Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, (New York, 1882), 362n.

<sup>10</sup> The Battle of Hanover took place on June 30, 1863, one day prior to the beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg.

<sup>11</sup> The Second New York Cavalry.

<sup>12</sup> In April 1864 Philip Sheridan commanded the Cavalry Corps made up of divisions under Alfred A. Torbert, Gregg, and James Harrison Wilson.

<sup>13</sup> Ide abruptly ends his introduction at this point. I have grafted on the end of William L. Greenleaf's sketch of the 1st Vermont Cavalry from Theodore S. Peck, compiler, *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers*, (Montpelier, 1892), 218.

## Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> Captain Stephen Phelps of Brattleboro, USMA 1836, Fourth United States Artillery, commanded the First Vermont Infantry. Five Vermont companies participated in the Union defeat on June 10, 1861 without loss. G. G. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, I, (Burlington, 1886), 28–29.

<sup>2</sup> Erastus Fairbanks served as governor in 1852–53 and 1860–61 and set the standards for raising Vermont troops, including finding professional soldiers to command all Vermont regiments.

*Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers*, (Montpelier, 1892), 742–743.

<sup>3</sup> The Vermont militia did contain mounted troops, but as the War Department had not asked for cavalry, the governor resisted raising them. The expense of horses, equipments, and arms would be borne by the federal government.

<sup>4</sup> Lemuel Platt, 50, was a physician and "an active politician" and "thriving farmer" from Colchester. He represented Chittenden County in 1849 and 50 and served repeatedly in town offices. He was a close friend of Senator Solomon Foot who served from 1850 to 1866 and who sug-

gested Platt to Secretary of War Simon Cameron to raise the regiment. Platt died in 1880 in Winooski, a mill owner and an "active and earnest Republican."

Obituary, *Burlington Free Press*, February 13, 1880.

<sup>5</sup> Frank A. Platt, 22, from Colchester, resigned on July 18, 1862.

Joel B. Erhardt, 23, from New York City, but residing in Burlington, was commissioned captain on July 18, 1862, but resigned because of a feud with Colonel Edward Sawyer on February 7, 1863. He later served in the Provost Marshal's office in New York City.

Ellis B. Edwards, 20, from Colchester, became a first lieutenant on July 16, 1862 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

All personnel data are taken from Theodore S. Peck's *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers*. Ages have been taken from the *Report of the Adjutant and Inspector General of the State of Vermont*, Montpelier, 1866 (for officers) and 1864 and 1865 (for enlisted men).

<sup>6</sup> George P. Conger, 43, from St. Albans, resigned on September 12, 1862. He later gained a measure of fame for rallying resistance to Confederate raiders during the St. Albans Raid on October 19, 1864.

William Beeman, 35, from St. Albans, became captain on October 30, 1862. He was taken prisoner at Brandy Station on October 11, 1863 and was mustered out on December 17, 1864 after being released on December 10th.

Jed P. Clark, 27, from Sheldon resigned on November 17, 1862 after being taken prisoner under very questionable circumstances on June 23, 1862. He claimed to have been taken and paroled by bushwhackers, but investigators found no evidence.

<sup>7</sup> John D. Bartlett, 31, from Montpelier, was promoted to major on November 18, 1861 and resigned on April 25, 1862.

William Wells, 23, from Waterbury, was mustered out as a brevet major general on January 15, 1866.

Henry M. Paige, 24, from Cabot, was mustered out on November 18, 1864 as a captain after being promoted to major on July 7, 1864, but presumably was not mustered.

<sup>8</sup> Addison W. Preston, 30, from Danville, rose to colonel and was killed on June 3, 1864 at Haw's Shop.

John W. Bennett, 25, from Newbury, was mustered out as lieutenant colonel on November 18, 1864.

William G. Cummings, 22, from Barnet, was mustered out on August 9, 1865 as lieutenant colonel.

<sup>9</sup> Samuel P. Rundlett, 40, from Royalton, resigned on March 17, 1863.

Andrew J. Grover, 29, from Hartford, was mustered out as a major on November 18, 1864.

John C. Holmes, 34, from Springfield, resigned on April 16, 1862.

<sup>10</sup> Josiah Hall, 26, from Westminster, was mustered out on June 21, 1865 as colonel.

Robert Schofield, 25, from Brattleboro, was mustered out on June 21, 1865 as a major.

Nathaniel E. Haywood, 29, from Brattleboro, resigned on July 14, 1862.

George B. Kellogg, 36, from Brattleboro, the original company commander, was dismissed on October 11, 1862 and later was allowed to resign backdated to July 18, 1862. He was absent without leave throughout Pope's Campaign.

<sup>11</sup> William D. Collins, 37, from Bennington, was commissioned major on November 18, 1861 and resigned on May 7, 1861.

James A. Sheldon, 39, from Rupert, resigned on March 12, 1862.

George H. Bean, 34, from Pownal, was dismissed for cowardice on April 28, 1863 as a captain.

<sup>12</sup> Selah G. Perkins, 34, from Castleton, was killed in action on September 22, 1862 at Ashby's Gap, Virginia.

Franklin T. Huntoon, 20, from Rutland, was promoted to captain on October 30, 1862 and resigned on March 25, 1863.

Charles A. Adams, 23, from Wallingford, was mustered out on June 21, 1865 as a major.

<sup>13</sup> Edward B. Sawyer, 33, from Hyde Park, resigned on April 24, 1864 as colonel.

Henry C. Flint, 22, from Irasburg, was killed on April 1, 1863 at Broad Run, Virginia.

Josiah Grout, 20, from Kirby, was discharged on October 1, 1863 for wounds received April 1, 1863 at Broad Run. He later served as major



in the 26th New York Cavalry (Frontier Cavalry) and as governor of Vermont.

<sup>14</sup> Franklin Moore, 45, from Shoreham, resigned on July 14, 1862.

John S. Ward, 41, from Shoreham, resigned as captain on November 19, 1862.

John Williamson, 23, died of wounds on June 20, 1864.

<sup>15</sup> Edgar Pitkin, 22, from Burlington, resigned on September 10, 1862 to enlist in the Regular cavalry and was later mortally wounded in action.

Archibald S. Dewey, 50, from Burlington, was promoted to Captain and Assistant Quartermaster of United States Volunteers on November 1, 1862 and served until June 30, 1865.

George S. Gale, 47, from Bridport, served as surgeon until mustered out on November 18, 1864.

Ptolemy O'Meara Edson, 27, from Chester, was promoted to Surgeon of the 17th Vermont Infantry on April 1, 1864 and served to the end of the war.

John H. Woodward, 52, from Westford, resigned on July 17, 1863 after the death of his son, Captain John Woodward of Company M on July 7th. The people of Westford erected a monument to the chaplain on the town green.

Alonzo H. Danforth, 23, from Rockingham, was promoted to second lieutenant of Company G and resigned on August 2, 1862.

Charles V. H. Sabin, 25, from Wallingford, was promoted to regimental quartermaster on December 20, 1862 and to Captain and Assistant Quartermaster of U.S. Volunteers and served to June 20, 1865.

Mark Wooster, 40, from Brattleboro, was promoted to regimental commissary on October 30, 1862 and to Captain and Commissary of Subsistence on May 7, 1864.

Joel Fisk, 28, from Hyde Park, served until November 18, 1864.

Cyrus Green, 31, from St. Albans was discharged on December 31, 1862 for disability.

Forrester A. Prouty, 35, from Brattleboro, was discharged on November 17, 1862 for disability.

Hosea Stone, 45, from Dummerston, reenlisted and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>16</sup> For further discussion of the color of the horses see Charles Tompkins, "With the Vermont Cavalry," *The Vermonter*, XVII, 1912, 506. A

note to Tomkins' article says: "One of the veterans of Preston's company (Company D.) says that that company was mounted on dark bays and that the light chestnuts or sorrels were in Company H., the Rutland company. The same authority gives as his recollection the following division of the colors: Company A. mahogany bay and brown; Companies B. and C. bright bay; Company D. dark bay; Company E. dark chestnut; Company F. light bay; Company G. gray, white and roan; Company H. light chestnut. From a veteran of Company A. we learn that the horses of companies I. and K. were black. Probably the black-chestnuts, a color quite usual in the Morgans, were classed as black."

<sup>17</sup> Collins had supposedly served a term in an artillery battery, but where and when has not been found. It is possible that he was a veteran of the Crimea.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel McDixon, 27, from Burlington, was discharged for disability on November 4, 1862.

<sup>19</sup> James W. Ellis, 21, from Brattleboro, served until November 18, 1864.

<sup>20</sup> Loren C. Richardson, 24, from Waterford, was discharged on May 28, 1862 for disability. He served in Company F.

<sup>21</sup> Lorin M. Brigham, 19, from Barnet, was killed on July 3, 1863 at Gettysburg.

George Ryan, 18, deserted on January 20, 1862. Both served in Company F.

<sup>22</sup> John N. Smith, 18, from Walden, served in Company D.

<sup>23</sup> Ide does not say why he originally enlisted in a company from the far end of the state. William Pierce, 29, from St. Johnsbury, served until November 18, 1864.

<sup>24</sup> Hiram M. Farnsworth, 39, from Chelsea.

<sup>25</sup> In 1862 Brattleboro became the permanent main military camp in Vermont and site of a major hospital. Presumably the citizens there found soldiers to be a burden.

<sup>26</sup> The rail route went from Burlington to Rutland, through Poultney and White Creek to Troy. The portion in Vermont, operated until the 1980's as part of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad, was pulled up in the early 1990's.

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> The 1st Battalion of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry under Major Greely Curtis left Annapolis for Hilton Head and arrived there on February 20, 1862, joining the 2nd and 3rd battalions that had left from New York City. Benjamin Crowninshield, *A History of the First Regiment of Massachusetts Cavalry Volunteers*, (Boston, 1891), 51–58.

<sup>2</sup> The 5th New York "Ira Harris" Cavalry was named after Senator Ira Harris and served throughout the war with the 1st Vermont Cavalry. Frederick Phisterer, compiler, *New York in the Rebellion*, (Albany, 1890), 302–303; Louis N. Boudrye, *Historic Records of the Fifth New York Cavalry*, (Albany, 1865). The 5th was also known as the 1st Ira Harris Guard, while the 6th New York was known as the 2nd Ira Harris Guard and the 12th as the 3rd Ira Harris Guard.

<sup>3</sup> John Porter Hatch (1822–1901), USMA 1845, was commissioned brigadier general on September 28, 1861. He later commanded Banks's cavalry and the 1st Division of the 1st Corps until badly wounded at South Mountain. He ended the war as commander of the District of Charleston. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, (Baton Rouge, 1964), 216–217.

<sup>4</sup> Jonas P. Holliday, USMA 1851, was from Oswego, New York, as was Hatch. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 542–543; William Wells to Sister Sarah, April 10, 1862, Wells Papers.

<sup>5</sup> The 53rd New York Infantry was mustered out on March 21, 1862 at Washington, D. C. Phisterer, *New York in the Rebellion*, 414.

<sup>6</sup> Rufus E. Whitcomb, 42, from Bradford, transferred to the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry on September 11, 1863 where he became the bandmaster. Crowninshield, 463.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen A. Clark, 21, from Northfield, was mustered out on August 9, 1865 as a first lieutenant; although promoted to captain of Company M, he was never mustered in.

<sup>8</sup> Clark P. Stone, 34, from Brattleboro, mustered out on August 9, 1865 as a captain.

<sup>9</sup> Nathaniel Banks did not trust Kellogg's abilities and broke the regiment up into detachments. The other field officer was William Collins, who commanded one of the detachments.

<sup>10</sup> John Chase, 36, from Danville, was mortally wounded on April 27, 1862. Served in Company D. He was the first man to die in action in the regiment.

<sup>11</sup> Austin Freeman, 21, from Brookfield, was discharged on May 18, 1862 for disability.

<sup>12</sup> Darwin Wright, 22, from St. Johnsbury, was captured on June 29, 1864 and died at Florence, South Carolina on October 20, 1864.

<sup>13</sup> David Hunter Strother's diaries are edited by Cecil D. Eby, Jr., *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War*, (Chapel Hill, 1961). This quote appears in Strother's *Personal Recollections of the Civil War*, (New York, 1867).

<sup>14</sup> Dennis M. Blackmer, 22, from Bennington, resigned on July 22, 1862. An attorney after the war, he was accused of statutory rape in Bennington in 1900, and during a break in the trial took a gun from his pocket and shot himself in the head. However, he lived until 1904. *Troy Times*, October 9, 1900 and information from Blackmer's tombstone located in the Bennington Centre Cemetery. He helped my great-great grandmother obtain her pension after the death of her husband in 1878.

<sup>15</sup> William D. Mann was born in Sandusky, Ohio on September 27, 1839, entered the 1st Michigan Cavalry on August 22, 1861 and became colonel of the 7th Michigan Cavalry on November 1, 1862. He resigned on March 1, 1864. William Lee, *Personal and Historical Sketches of the Seventh Michigan Cavalry*, (Detroit, 1990), 22.

<sup>16</sup> Harris B. Mitchell, 22, from Newbury, was mustered out on August 9, 1865 as a captain. He enlisted in Company D.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Caffrey, 27, and James Moore, 24, both were from Bennington. Both were mustered out on May 22, 1862 as paroled prisoners.

### Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup> Town's Readers were a popular series of grammar school text books printed in the middle of the 19th century.

<sup>2</sup> Charles K. Tompkins was born on September 12, 1830 at Fortress Monroe, Virginia and died in Washington in 1915. He was a USMA graduate and a lieutenant in the 2nd U.S. Cavalry. He received a Medal of Honor for his charge at Fairfax Court House on June 1, 1861 and was promoted brevet brigadier general due to his wartime service with the Quartermaster Department. Roger D. Hunt and Roger Brown, *Brevet Brigadier Generals in Blue*, (Gaithersburg, 1990), 621.

<sup>3</sup> Kellogg had no support within the Army or state government. He had served as Adjutant General of Vermont during the 1850's. By July he disappeared from the regiment and a War Department investigation found him "absent keeping a bar selling liquor" and cashiered him. Summation of the investigation, dated October 1, 1862, located in Edward Sawyer's personnel file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Charles A. Woodbury, 25, from Hyde Park, was killed on April 1, 1863 at Broad Run.

<sup>5</sup> Collins led his battalion and was joined by a battalion from the 1st Maine Cavalry. Collins led a misguided attack down the Valley Pike into barricades and artillery fire, suffering great losses in companies A and G. Collins was injured and captured. See Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 560-562 and Edward Tobie, *History of the First Maine Cavalry*, (Boston, 1887), 35-38.

<sup>6</sup> The company of Collis Zouaves later became the basis of the 114th Pennsylvania Infantry. Frank Rausher, *Music on the March*, (Philadelphia, 1892).

<sup>7</sup> Chaplain John Woodward could have made a good line officer according to Charles Tompkins, "With the Vermont Cavalry," *The Vermonter*, XVII, 1912, 506.

<sup>8</sup> Benedict says the colors were burned with the wagons, and, as the Confederates never claimed to have captured them, this probably is true. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 563.

<sup>9</sup> Sawyer went back to Vermont on crutches and did not return to the regiment until the beginning of October, after being commissioned colonel. See Chapter Six. Mr. Wesley Eldred of the Bailey/Howe Library, the University of Vermont, Sawyer's great-grandson, says that Sawyer limped until his death in 1917.

<sup>10</sup> George A. Austin, 28, from Vershire, reenlisted and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>11</sup> Corporal Ashbell Meacham, 20, from Guildhall, is buried in the Winchester National Cemetery.

Loring Chase, 31, from Peacham, reenlisted and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

John Coombs, 24, from Thetford, mustered out on November 18, 1864 as a corporal.

<sup>12</sup> John A. Judson, Hatch's Assistant Adjutant General.

<sup>13</sup> Loren W. Young, "44", from Sutton, was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>14</sup> The Union loss is recorded at 62 killed, 243 wounded, and 1,714 captured, total 2,019. Frederick Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, (Dayton, 1978), 900. Jackson lost 68 killed and 329 wounded and missing and claimed 2,903 prisoners. Brandon Beck and Charles Gruder, *The First Battle of Winchester*, (Lynchburg, 1992), 62.

<sup>15</sup> Ralph Merrill (real name Ralph W. Straw), 18, was recorded killed in action in the *Revised Roster* published in 1892. Ide was commissary general in the 1880's and could have had the record amended. Theodore S. Peck, the adjutant general who published the book, served a year in Com-

pany F before being promoted to quartermaster sergeant of the 9th Vermont Infantry.

<sup>16</sup> General Rufus Saxton (1824–1908) USMA 1849, commanded the defenses of Harper's Ferry. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 420–421.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Johnstone served as lieutenant colonel of the 5th New York Cavalry until cashiered on December 5, 1863.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Knapp, 44, from St. Johnsbury, was discharged on November 5, 1862 for disability.

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup> Beals Patent Remington revolvers, probably the best pistols for cavalry use as they did not tend to break in half, as did Colt revolvers. Earl J. Coates and Dean S. Thomas, *An Introduction to Civil War Small Arms*, (Gettysburg, 1990), 54, 61.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant Clark resigned on November 17, 1862.

<sup>3</sup> Ashby actually was killed by one of the Bucktails, riflemen of the 13th Regiment Pennsylvania Reserves. O. R. Howard Thomson and William H. Rauch, *History of the "Bucktails"*, (Philadelphia, 1906), 145–168.

<sup>4</sup> Austin A. Bailey, 30, from Danville and Fernal (or Farnal) Webber, 27, deserted on June 26, 1862.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Wylie Crawford, (1829–1892), University of Pennsylvania 1846, appointed assistant surgeon U.S. Army in 1851, commanded a battery at Fort Sumter. Promoted to brigadier general of volunteers, he commanded a brigade under Banks and a division at Antietam. After commanding the Pennsylvania Reserves at Gettysburg, he commanded the 3rd Division, 5th Corps under Grant. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 99–100.

<sup>6</sup> Barney Decker, 30, from Derby, was mustered out on June 21, 1865 as a second lieutenant. Enlisted in Company D.

<sup>7</sup> William Wheaton, 18, from West Fairlee, was mustered out on April 10, 1865 after twice being taken prisoner. Enlisted in Company D. Kidd served with Harry Gilmore's command, Harry Gilmore, *Four Years in the Saddle*, (New York, 1866), 44. See Chapter 22 for a discussion of Gilmore's reliability.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph W. Gordon was from Chelsea.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Holcombe Robertson (1827–1910) USMA 1849, colonel of the 4th Virginia Cavalry, became brigadier general on June 9, 1862. Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, (Baton Rouge, 1959), 261–262.

<sup>10</sup> Eben Grant, 34, from Irasburg, was mustered out on June 21, 1865 as captain in Company I.

Marvin Mason, 22, from Irasburg, was discharged on November 5, 1862 for disability. He enlisted in the Veteran Reserve Corps on June 26, 1863 and transferred to Company I on February 24, 1864. He reenlisted on March 29, 1864 and was mustered out as second lieutenant of Company F on August 9, 1865.

<sup>11</sup> William Woodward (or Woodard), 21, from St. Johnsbury, was discharged for disability on October 24, 1862.

<sup>12</sup> Captain William Wells had this to say about Conger: "About 1 PM five Cos under Capt. Conger was ordered to go down the Rail Road 10 miles towards Gordonsville and burn a RR Bridge.... No officers heard the orders but Capt. Conger, but instead of his doing as ordered he went down about 7 or 8 miles and picked up some stragglers & drove in some beef cattle. He got some whiskey at some place & I think was a little \_\_\_\_\_." William Wells to his parents, July 13, 1862.

<sup>13</sup> Conceader F. Durlam, 19, from Concord, died at Richmond on September 5, 1862.

<sup>14</sup> In December 1860 Senator John Crittenden from Kentucky proposed six constitutional amendments known together as the Crittenden Compromise. They were, 1) the prohibition of slavery north of 36° 30' (the Missouri Compromise line) and that the status of future states would be decided on "popular sovereignty", 2) prohibited Congress from abolishing slavery in any territory, 3) forbade emancipation in the District of Colum-



bia as long as Virginia and Maryland kept slavery, 4) protected interstate trade in slaves, 5) federal government would compensate owners of runaway slaves, 6) no further amendments would render these null and void. Lincoln did not support the measure and the Senate rejected the Compromise 25–23. Patricia L. Faust, editor, *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War*, (New York, 1986), 193.

## Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Adjutant and Inspector General, (Montpelier, 1866) notes that Kellogg was dismissed from the service on October 11, 1862, however, the *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers* lists him as resigning as of July 18, 1862. Benedict, writing in 1888, also says Kellogg resigned. I conclude that he was cashiered, but that after the war had ended he induced the War Department to let him save face by claiming he properly resigned.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Tompkins, "With the Vermont Cavalry in 1861–2," *The Vermonter*, XVII, 1912, 506.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 507.

<sup>4</sup> Roger D. Hunt and Jack R. Brown, *Brevet Brigadier Generals in Blue*, (Gaithersburg, 1990), 621.

<sup>5</sup> Wells to his parents, July 22, 1862.

<sup>6</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 571.

<sup>7</sup> *Official Records*, Series I, XII, Part 2, 111–114. Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862. Subsequent cites from the *Official Records* are from Series One.

<sup>8</sup> *O.R.*, XII, Part 2, 112–114. William N. McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade*, (Baltimore, 1907), 78–79.

<sup>9</sup> Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862.

<sup>10</sup> Letter of Homer Ruggles, August 2, 1862, printed in the *Montpelier Green Mountain Freeman*, August 13, 1862.

<sup>11</sup> Dan Oates, ed., *Hanging Rock Rebel, Lt. John Blue's War in West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley*, (Shippensburg, 1994), 114. Blue was a member of the 11th Virginia Cavalry and had volunteered to accompany the 7th Virginia Cavalry this day.

<sup>12</sup> Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862.

<sup>13</sup> Blue, 114.

<sup>14</sup> Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862.

<sup>15</sup> Ruggles, August 2, 1862.

<sup>16</sup> Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862.

<sup>17</sup> *O.R.*, XII, Part 2, 111–114. Blue, 114. Richard L. Armstrong, *7th Virginia Cavalry*, (Lynchburg, 1992), 40, lists that regiment's casualties as 18 wounded and 42 captured, a copy of the figures in Jones's report.

<sup>18</sup> 5th New York losses from Frederick Phisterer's *New York in the War of the Rebellion*, 303.

<sup>19</sup> Wells to his parents, August 3, 1862.

<sup>20</sup> Ruggles, August 2, 1862.

<sup>21</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 573.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* Wells to his parents, August 11, 1862.

<sup>23</sup> Wells to his parents, August 11, 1862.

<sup>24</sup> Wells to his parents, August 20, 1862.

<sup>25</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 574.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* It is possible that they hitched a ride on a transport.

<sup>27</sup> Wells to his parents, September 7, 1862. John Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, (New York, 1993), 430–435. Neither Buford nor Tompkins filed a report for the Bull Run campaign. Hennessy relies on Confederate reports to recreate the August 30th engagement. Hennessy's book is a fine example of a modern campaign study.

<sup>28</sup> Lorentio King to his aunt, August 30, 1863, Lorentio King Papers, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, The University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

<sup>29</sup> Wells to parents, September 7, 1862.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 575.

<sup>31</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 575. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, 1557–1558.

<sup>32</sup> Regimental Returns of the First Vermont Cavalry, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>33</sup> Regimental Order Book of the First Vermont Cavalry, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, *Revised Roster*, 227. Conger was the senior captain.

<sup>35</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 576., *O.R.*, XIX, Part 2, 3–4., Michael Musick, *6th Virginia Cavalry*, (Lynchburg, 1990), 22–23. Musick uses only Benedict as a source, yet fails to mention the numerical strength of the Vermonters and that they only used sabres.

<sup>36</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 576.

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Stone, "Diary," The University of Vermont. Stone enlisted on August 26, 1862 and received a furlough to September 2nd. Sawyer's knowledge of drill and tactics was questionable during the remainder of his military career.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Court martial charges by Joel Erhardt, January 8, 1863, Sawyer file, National Archives.

<sup>3</sup> *Revised Roster*, comparison of officers' dates of rank.

<sup>4</sup> Report of E. D. Townsend, assistant adjutant general, November 2, 1862, Sawyer file. Obviously this whole matter originated with Charles Tompkins on the day he resigned, September 9th, and reentered the quartermaster service.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Andrew Jonathan Alexander (1833–1887) received a direct commission to the 3rd U.S. Cavalry in 1861. Later, he served as lieutenant colonel on James Wilson's staff and received a brevet promotion to brigadier general in 1865. Hunt and Brown, 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* This endorsement was signed by Lorenzo Thomas, the Adjutant General.

<sup>8</sup> Special order extract, Sawyer file.

<sup>9</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 575–576. Sawyer's obituary provided by great-grandson Wesley Eldred, newspaper and exact date unknown.

<sup>10</sup> *O.R.*, XII, Part 1, 587–593. Collins' obituary in the *Bennington Banner*, November 29, 1895. After the war Collins moved to Charles City, Iowa where he worked as a school principal.

<sup>11</sup> Report of Major William Collins, November 24, 1862, Sawyer file.

<sup>12</sup> Sawyer to Wells, November 28, 1862, William Wells Papers. Stephen Chellis was born in Manchester, Vermont in 1830 and married Hellen H. Hadaway in Poultney on March 14, 1852. They had two children, the last being born in Tampa, Florida, where the family lived in 1860. She was not involved in his 1862 escapades. One year and one day after being discharged from the army, Chellis walked his two children to school and kept on walking, never to be seen by his family again. Chellis

was the brother-in-law of Sergeant James Hadaway and Henry H. Hadaway, both of Company G. E-mail from Gary Chellis, November 30, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> Sawyer's affidavit, Sawyer file.

<sup>14</sup> A.G. Wheeler to Abraham Lincoln, December 30, 1862, Sawyer file. The White House referred the letter to the War Department and it was included in the growing file. His son H.O. Wheeler wrote Vernon Fitch on November 18, 1862: "What do you think about Col. Sawyer's removal? We consider it little the best thing that has happened to us. The regiment nearly leaped for joy at the announcement. He is not a man of character, of military tact or experience. He is not a man the people of Vt want their sons to be under, or even to associate with." Fitch Family Papers, University of Vermont.

<sup>15</sup> Court martial charges and affidavits dated January 8, 1863 brought by William Collins, Sawyer file.

<sup>16</sup> Court martial charges dated January 8, 1863 brought by Joel Erhardt and others, Sawyer file. Sawyer and Erhardt were old antagonists. On September 29th, Private Alvah Haswell of Company G was reprimanded in front of the entire regiment for impertinence to Captain Erhardt and had to beg an apology. Sawyer appointed Haswell a sergeant on December 24th, perhaps to undermine anti-Sawyer feeling in Collins' old Company G. Haswell ended up as a captain by war's end. On October 15th Sawyer detailed Erhardt to take command of Company E, but the same day had him arrested for disobeying orders. Regimental Orderbook, National Archives.

<sup>17</sup> Report of Captain Wesley Merritt to Lt. Col. S.H. Lathrop, January 24, 1863, Sawyer file.

<sup>18</sup> Report of Captain Wesley Merritt to Lt. Col. S.H. Lathrop, January 28, 1863, Sawyer file.

<sup>19</sup> Petition, February 4, 1863, Sawyer file.

<sup>20</sup> Sawyer's Muster Roll, Sawyer personal file.

<sup>21</sup> See Ide's Chapter Nine. Preston had missed all the excitement as he was absent from September 22, 1862 to May 1863, but his argument with Sawyer began prior to the Gettysburg Campaign.

<sup>22</sup> C. A. Adams to Wells, December 21, 1863, William Wells Papers.

<sup>23</sup> Wells to his parents, September 22, 1863. Just what the enlisted men thought of this feud is uncertain.

<sup>24</sup> John Baillie McIntosh (1829–1888) appointed a second lieutenant in 2nd U.S. Cavalry in 1861, colonel 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry on November 15, 1862. Commanded a brigade in 2nd Cavalry Division in spring 1863 and transferred to 1st Brigade Third Division. He lost a leg a Opequan and retired from the Army in 1870 as a brigadier general. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 300–301.

<sup>25</sup> Endorsements on Sawyer's resignation, Sawyer file.

<sup>26</sup> George F. Sprague, *Soldiers' Record Town of Craftsbury, Vermont*, (n.p., 1914), 37; *O.R.*, XIX, Part 2, 100.

<sup>27</sup> Sprague, 38.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Stone, "Diary." Details of the ferry service can also be found in the Albert F. Sawyer Collection, University of Vermont. Sawyer served in Company L.

<sup>30</sup> Wells to Brother Fred, February 6, 1863.

<sup>31</sup> Stone, "Diary."

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* Williams is Henry C. Williams, Company E, 33, from Springfield, enlisted October 12, 1861, mustered out November 18, 1864 as sergeant. Frank Snay, Company H, 21, from Berkshire, enlisted August 29, 1862, wounded October 11, 1863, deserted in January 1865.

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup> John Adams Dix (1798–1879), Secretary of the Treasury under President James Buchanan, was appointed the senior major general of volunteers on May 16, 1861, being chiefly employed in departmental and garrison duties. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 125–126.

Daniel Harvey Hill (1821–1889) USMA 1842, was then a division commander under Lee. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 136–137.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph O. Clark, 21, from Barnet, was taken prisoner on May 24, 1862 at Winchester, Virginia. He reenlisted, was captured again at Hanover Court House on June 1, 1864, and died of disease in April 1865 after being paroled on November 20, 1864.

Joseph Hutchinson, 32, from St. Johnsbury, was taken prisoner on May 24, 1862 at Winchester and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

Lorenzo Brown(e), 22, from Concord, was discharged on May 23, 1862, but was captured the next day and paroled on September 14, 1862. His discharge was changed to that date.

Benjamin F. Carr, 28, from Danville, was discharged on May 18, 1862. There is no record he was a prisoner. All of these men served in Company D.

<sup>3</sup> Albert Kinerson (Kenison), 22, from Cabot, died at Lynchburg on August 15, 1862.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Corcoran (1827–1863) commanded the 69th New York Infantry and was wounded and captured at Bull Run on July 21, 1861. Faust, 165–166.

John T. Drew, 25, from Burlington, commander of Company G, 2nd Vermont Infantry, was taken prisoner on July 21, 1861. He was paroled on August 17, 1862 and resigned on October 8, 1862. He later served in the Veteran Reserve Corps.

No Captain Dean served in a Vermont or United States regiment. Perhaps he was a Vermonter who served in a regiment from a state to which he had emigrated. Drew was the only Vermont captain captured until the surrender of the 9th Vermont at Harper's Ferry on September 15, 1862.

<sup>5</sup> Nathaniel P. Banks's Corps attacked Stonewall Jackson's superior forces south of Culpeper on August 9th and almost defeated the Confeder-

ates. Jackson finally drove Banks back, losing 1,350 casualties and inflicting 2,400, the difference chiefly being the captured men. Robert B. Krick, *Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain*, (Chapel Hill, 1990) and Edward J. Stackpole, *From Cedar Mountain to Antietam*, (Harrisburg, 1959).

<sup>6</sup> Conceader Durlam was buried on September 5, 1862 and his grave was lost.

<sup>7</sup> Franklin J. Douglas(s) from West Fairlee, was discharged from Company D, 1st Vermont Cavalry as a corporal on April 2, 1862. He enlisted in Company G, 9th Vermont Infantry on June 20, 1862 and was discharged on November 6, 1862. He enlisted a third time in Company K, 8th Vermont Infantry on January 4, 1864, was promoted to corporal on July 1, 1864 and was mustered out on June 28, 1865. There is no record of him being a prisoner of war. His age is recorded as 37, 30, and 22 on his enlistment papers.

<sup>8</sup> Warren Gibbs, 31, from Westford, was taken prisoner on May 24, 1862 at Winchester, transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps on March 8, 1864 and was discharged on November 18, 1864.

<sup>9</sup> Jacob Goodell, 23, from Waterford, was mustered out on July 27, 1864.

Amos H. Robinson, 19, from St. Johnsbury, was discharged on January 25, 1864 for disability. Both served in Company C, 3rd Vermont Infantry and had been taken prisoner in September 1861 in Virginia.

<sup>10</sup> The paroled men could do no duty with the regiment that could injure the Confederacy. Many men rejoined the regiment with or without proper authority, and were given nothing to do but sit and wait to be exchanged.

<sup>11</sup> I suspect that Lieutenant William Cummings, one of Ide's friends and fellow townsmen from Barnet, covered for him and gave him the civilian clothes to get him past the provost guard. Ide probably was absent from November 1, 1862 to January 1, 1863, not the month he claims. He received pay for those months he was absent without leave. Had he been caught, a court martial would have quickly followed.



## Chapter 8

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Peter Heintzelman (1805–1880) USMA 1826, had commanded the Third Corps under McClellan and Pope. He took command of the Defenses of Washington in September 1862. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 227–228.

<sup>2</sup> The state never did raise a second cavalry regiment, but William Wells, as late as the fall of 1863, asked his father, a state representative, that Lieutenant Colonel Addison Preston be made colonel instead of John Bennett. See Wells to his father October 25 and November 6, 1863, Wells Papers.

<sup>3</sup> Charles W. Bickford, 19, from Glover, had been discharged for disability on April 6, 1862, but reenlisted in Company D on September 20, 1862. He was captured on April 1, 1863, transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps on May 15, 1864 and was discharged on August 2, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> James L. Rush, 32, from Holland.

William R. Roundy, 28, from Sutton, mustered out on June 21, 1865. Both men were 1862 recruits.

<sup>5</sup> Jacob Trussell, 28, from Peacham, enlisted in Company D as first sergeant and mustered out as a first lieutenant on November 18, 1864.

<sup>6</sup> Charles H. Pixley, 21, from Enosburg Falls, enlisted as quartermaster sergeant and was promoted to lieutenant on February 1, 1863.

<sup>7</sup> Wells saw Taggart ride in and wrote home that he was "pretty full of o'be joyfull." Wells to his parents on March 17, 1863.

Then the meeting began.

<sup>8</sup> Taggart tried to blame Lieutenant Edwin H. Higley, 19, from Castleton. He had enlisted in Company K as first sergeant and was promoted to lieutenant on July 16, 1862. Taggart claimed Higley should have recaptured the Vermonters. Higley was dismissed, but won reinstatement. He was discharged as a captain on May 15, 1865 after being wounded and taken prisoner on June 23, 1864. Charles Taggart was killed in action on October 22, 1863.

<sup>9</sup> James Ames, a deserter from the 5th New York Cavalry, supposedly killed Woodbury. Ames rose to captain with Mosby before being killed on October 9, 1864. Presumably Ames wore his United States Army uniform, as did many of Mosby's men, in the Miskel Farm fight. Hugh C. Kean and Horace Mewborn, *43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry Mosby's Command*, (Lynchburg, 1993), 291. John S. Mosby, *Mosby's War Reminiscences*, (New York, 1898), 110.

<sup>10</sup> Orin S. Hendrick, 18, from Concord, was taken prisoner at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>11</sup> Eli Holden, 26, from Barre, enlisted in Company C as first sergeant, was promoted to lieutenant on November 18, 1861, was captured on September 26, 1863 and held until March 1, 1865. He was mustered out two weeks later.

<sup>12</sup> Mosby claims two officers and seven men killed, but this is incorrect. The captured men were paroled in a week and most were exchanged before the Gettysburg Campaign. Two officers and six men were killed.

<sup>13</sup> Carlostin C. Ferry, 34, from Hyde Park, had been taken prisoner on October 24, 1862, paroled on October 30, 1862 and finally mustered out on November 18, 1864. There is no record that he was taken prisoner by Mosby.

<sup>14</sup> Henry C. Flint had taken part in the skirmish at Ashby's Gap on September 22, 1862 where seventy Vermonters, using only their sabres, routed the 6th Virginia Cavalry. I feel that the effective shock action there impressed Flint and he tried similar tactics on Mosby, but the situation had changed and perhaps fighting on foot using carbines, arms that few of Mosby's men carried at that time, would have been much more damaging to the guerrillas. Flint made a battlefield decision and paid full price for it. He is buried in Irasburg under a stone that simply says "Greater Love Hath No Man." Woodbury is buried in Craftsbury Common.

<sup>15</sup> George H. Bean, 34, from Pownal, had a checkered career at best. He was captured on May 24, 1862, paroled on August 17, 1862, dishonorably discharged on October 11, 1862, restored on November 18, 1862 and finally dismissed on April 28, 1863. Flint should bear the responsibility for the poor tactics, but Bean could not save himself.

<sup>16</sup> Harry B. Philbrook, 22, from Hardwick, a recruit, transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps in October 1864 and was discharged on February 15, 1865.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Y. "Dick" Moran of Mosby's Company A. He was severely wounded and captured at Warrenton Junction on May 3, 1863 and remained in prison until April 27, 1864. Captured again on September 4, 1864 and he was released on taking the oath of allegiance on June 15, 1865 at Fort Warren. He was born in 1814 in Loudoun County. See Keen and Mewborn, 350. He was one of Mosby's first and oldest recruits.

<sup>18</sup> Colonel Francis Fessenden of Portland commanded the 25th Maine, a nine month regiment. From March 24 to June 21, 1863 the regiment picketed the vicinity of Chantilly. William E.S. Whitman and Charles B. True, *Maine in the War for the Union*, (Lewiston, 1865), 525.

<sup>19</sup> Julius Stahel Szadaveld (1825–1912) was an Hungarian adventurer who commanded the cavalry in the Defenses of Washington. He began the war as lieutenant colonel of the 8th New York Infantry, commanded a division under Sigel at Second Bull Run and later commanded a cavalry division under General David Hunter. He won a Medal of Honor at the Battle of Piedmont, but served the remainder of the war on court martial duty until he resigned in February 1865. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 469–470.

<sup>20</sup> The men were captured on April 1 and paroled on April 7.

<sup>21</sup> Josiah Grout was discharged for disability on October 1, 1863. Grout wrote to then Colonel William Wells in the fall of 1864 seeking reinstatement, but instead became a major in the 26th New York "Frontier" Cavalry. A unit made up of Yorkers, Vermonters, and Bay Staters, it patrolled the Canadian border in the wake of the St. Albans Raid. He later became governor of Vermont. See Josiah Grout, *Memoirs of Gen'l William Wallace Grout and Autobiography*, (Newport, 1919).

<sup>22</sup> Russell A. Alger (1836–1907) served as major of the 2nd Michigan Cavalry, lieutenant colonel of the 6th Michigan Cavalry and colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry. He received a brevet promotion to major general and served as Secretary of War during the Spanish-American War, 1897–

1899. J.H. Kidd, *Personal Recollections of a Cavalryman*, (Ionia, 1908), 54–55.

Colonel George Gray resigned on May 19, 1864. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Michigan*, (Lansing, 1865), Appendix, 7.

<sup>23</sup> "Beauregard" is probably the nickname for Blacksmith Herbert A. Boomhour, 18, from Hyde Park. He originally enlisted in Company I, transferred to Company D, and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

Levi P. Howland, 21, from Newbury, enlisted as a recruit on July 16, 1862 and deserted on June 30, 1863.

<sup>24</sup> Private Brandford Smith Hoskins was formerly a captain in the 44th Royal Infantry. Keen and Mewborn, 332.

<sup>25</sup> Lieutenant Eldin Hartshorn, 20, from Lunenburg, and twenty-five enlisted men from Company E, 15th Vermont Infantry guarded the ten car train, and, Ide notwithstanding, did the correct thing in retiring before a Confederate force consisting of an artillery piece and sixty guerrillas.

<sup>26</sup> Job Corey, 22, from Tinmouth.

Ide is incorrect in placing Dick Moran at this skirmish as he had been wounded and captured on May 3, 1863.

<sup>27</sup> This is Ide's copy of the report. Peter T. Washburn was the Adjutant and Inspector General of Vermont.

<sup>28</sup> John H. Hazelton, 24, from Rutland, entered Company H as quartermaster sergeant and was promoted to lieutenant on October 30, 1862. He mustered out as a major on August 9, 1865.

Daniel J. Hill, 31, from Berlin, entered Company C as a corporal, transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps on February 8, 1864 and was discharged on September 22, 1864.

<sup>29</sup> William H. Chapman (1840–1929) had a distinguished career in the Confederate artillery and with Mosby. He ended the war as a lieutenant colonel. Late in life this former Rebel became an agent for the Internal Revenue Service. Keen and Mewborn, 305–306.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Corey, 19, from Tinmouth, was wounded and captured on October 11, 1863, paroled a month later. He was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

## Chapter 9

<sup>1</sup> William G. Cummings, 23, from Barnet, entered Company D as a second lieutenant, was taken prisoner on December 28, 1862, and paroled on May 5, 1863, ending the war as a lieutenant colonel.

Jacob Trussell, 29, from Peacham, was the original first sergeant of Company D and mustered out as a first lieutenant on November 18, 1864.

Harris B. Mitchell, 22, from Newbury, rose from sergeant of Company D to captain of Company A and mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Clarence D. Gates, 23, from Cambridge, left Dartmouth College to become adjutant on October 4, 1862. He was captured on September 13, 1863, paroled two months later, and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

John W. Newton, 24, from St. Albans, resigned on February 27, 1864 as captain of Company L.

<sup>3</sup> Although Frederick Holbrook had promoted Sawyer in September 1862, the two men must have had a falling out. John Gregory Smith became governor in the fall of 1863 and served two terms.

<sup>4</sup> The quote is from Sawyer's official report, *O.R.*, XXVII, Part 1, 1016.

<sup>5</sup> Josiah H. Moore, 21, from Barnet, enlisted as a sergeant in Company D on September 25, 1861, reenlisted, was promoted first sergeant on June 21, 1863, was promoted second lieutenant on June 1, 1863 (issued September 7, 1863), was captured on June 29, 1864, paroled September 12th and mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>6</sup> After 1872 the record was changed to include Warrenton on June 18, 1863. Ridley's Shop was a skirmish on June 30, 1864 during Wilson's Raid.

<sup>7</sup> On June 30, 1863 the regiment numbered 647 officers and men present for duty. Regimental Muster Rolls, National Archives. The regiment did reach this number several times from 1863–1865.

<sup>8</sup> Hungarian born Julius Stahel was replaced by Judson Kilpatrick (1836–1881) USMA 1861, who rose from a captain in the 5th New York Infantry to brigadier general on June 14, 1863. Known as Kill-cavalry because of his reckless charges, he commanded the Third Division until transferred to command a division of Sherman's cavalry in April 1864. Upon hearing of the change of command, William Wells wrote home that "We are glad to have a Yankee to command us instead of a Come Stayl." Wells to his mother, June 28, 1863, Wells Papers.

<sup>9</sup> Ide is incorrect as the 2nd Pennsylvania Cavalry became part of the Provost Guard of the Army of the Potomac.

<sup>10</sup> John F. Morse, 23, from Peacham, was mustered out on November 18, 1864 after three years in Company D.

<sup>11</sup> Antipas H. Curtis, 18, from Chelsea, reenlisted in Company D on December 20, 1863, was wounded on June 22, 1864, deserted on October 4, 1864, but returned six weeks later and mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>12</sup> James Wright, 18, from Ryegate, was mustered out after three years in Company D as a sergeant on November 18, 1864.

<sup>13</sup> Lieutenant Colonel W. H. Payne of the 4th Virginia Cavalry temporarily commanded the 2nd North Carolina Cavalry. H. B. McClellan, *The Life and Campaigns of Major General J. E. B. Stuart*, (Boston, 1885), 327.

<sup>14</sup> Silas Kingsley, 25, from Fletcher, enlisted in Company D on August 15, 1862, was captured on July 6, 1863 and died at Andersonville on September 4, 1864.

<sup>15</sup> The captured flag belonged to the 13th Virginia Cavalry.

<sup>16</sup> A caisson of Battery M, 2nd United States Artillery exploded in Abbotstown, killing Private James Moran. James A. Morgan III, *Always Ready, Always Willing*, (Gaithersburg, n.d.), 21.

<sup>17</sup> Chester Orr, 26, from Ryegate, enlisted in Company D on August 29, 1862, was taken prisoner on June 29, 1864, was paroled on April 28, 1865, and mustered out on May 13, 1865.

<sup>18</sup> Kilpatrick fought Wade Hampton's cavalry at Hunterstown on the late afternoon of July 2, a skirmish highlighted by Custer making a sabre charge with Company A 6th Michigan Cavalry—which Hampton's men promptly shot to pieces. Union artillery and dismounted men cut up Cobb's Georgia Legion making a counterattack. The skirmish then settled down into an extended artillery duel. Edward C. Longacre, *The Cavalry at Gettysburg*, (Rutherford, 1986), 200–201. *O.R.*, XXVII, Part 1, 1012–1013.

<sup>19</sup> These companies were from the 1st and 3rd battalions and none were squadron mates. *O.R.*, XXVII, Part 1, 1013.

<sup>20</sup> Henry C. Parsons, 21, from Burlington commanded Company L. He wrote "Farnsworth's Charge and Death" for Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, III, (New York, 1956), 393–396. The article contains several minor errors and may be an attempt to elevate himself at the expense of Wells and Preston. In February 1864 he returned to the regiment from Vermont, where he was recuperating from wounds received at Gettysburg, to face unspecified charges. He was allowed to resign as of January 4, 1864. See Charles Chapin Collection, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Chapin was a sergeant in Company L.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick C. Gilligan, 23, from Brookfield, enlisted on September 18, 1861, was captured May 5, 1864, escaped on February 5, 1865, and mustered out on May 19, 1865.

<sup>22</sup> Parsons sketched a dramatic scene between Kilpatrick and a reluctant Farnsworth in his article. Supposedly Kilpatrick alleged that Farnsworth was a coward and Farnsworth, hurt and angry, gave in to Kilpatrick's order. Parsons, "Kilpatrick's Charge and Death," 394.

<sup>23</sup> Corporal David P. Freeman, 20, from Moretown, enlisted on September 19, 1861, was captured on July 6, 1863, and was paroled on December 28, 1863. He was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>24</sup> Assistant Surgeon Ptolemy O'Meara Edson wrote in a letter to historian George G. Benedict on June 25, 1888: "When found, the body was stripped to flannel shirt and drawers and stockings. There were five bullet wounds upon the body—four in the chest and abdomen, and one high up in the thigh. He had no wound or injury of any sort in the head or face.

In view of these facts it seems improbable at least, that General Farnsworth had any need to shoot himself, though Colonel Oates (of the Fifteenth Alabama), who claims to have seen it, was undoubtedly there and has declared that it was a suicide. General Farnsworth certainly did not blow his own brains out, nor did any one do it for him." In Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 602.

Presented with this evidence, Oates then claimed Farnsworth did not really shoot himself in the head, but rather in the heart. William C. Oates, *The War Between the Union and Confederacy*, (Dayton, 1985), 236–237.

More likely, Oates encountered Captain Oliver T. Cushman, who was horribly wounded under the nose. He wore a white "fighting jacket" a young lady had made for him, and had pinned a handkerchief over his kepi to block the sun. Pinned to the earth by his dead horse, he fought it out with his pistols until he fainted.

<sup>25</sup> Swinton, 16.

<sup>26</sup> Lorin M. Brigham, 19, from Barnet, enlisted on November 12, 1861.

<sup>27</sup> Kilpatrick did not order Farnsworth to attack until after the repulse of Longstreet's assault. Hood's men were in position to protect Lee's flank. The losses in Farnsworth's Charge were not one-sided. George B. Crosby, riding with Company F wrote in his diary that "it is strange that the whole Co was not killed. We had a good many horses killed. Shot one reb, shot at a good many." George R. Crosby, "Diary," Vermont Historical Society.

<sup>28</sup> Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), probably the best-known minister in the United States and brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." He is known more as an abolitionist than novelist. Faust, 53.

<sup>29</sup> Brigadier General John Imboden (1823–1895) was effective in protecting Lee's supply and ambulance trains, but did lose about one hundred



wagons to Kilpatrick. *O.R.*, XXVII, Part 1, 993-994, 1006, 1014. Long-acre, 254-255.

<sup>30</sup> Silas Kingsley died on September 4, 1864 and Samuel Washburn, 27, from Holland, who entered Company D on August 11, 1862, died at Andersonville on August 2, 1864.

<sup>31</sup> See note 11.

<sup>32</sup> John W. Woodward, 23, from Burlington graduated from the University of Vermont in 1862 and became captain of Company M on November 19, 1862. In a skirmish at Aldie on March 2, 1863 he shot Tom Turner, one of Mosby's most trusted men, as he was lying pinned by his fallen horse. Mosby saved him from retribution and called him Captain Worthington. John S. Mosby, *Mosby's War Reminiscences*, (New York, 1898), 53. Just before the campaign opened, Woodward learned of the death of his 18 year-old fiancée Hattie E. Chadwick from fever on May 19, 1863 and it appears that he then sought death on the battlefield. They are buried together under one headstone in Jeffersonville, Vermont.

The regiment lost 8 killed, 12 wounded, and 55 missing at Hagers-town.

<sup>33</sup> George A. Austin, 28, from Vershire, reenlisted and mustered out on August 9, 1865.

John Woodard, 18, from St. Johnsbury, reenlisted and mustered out on August 9, 1865 as a sergeant.

Harrison K. "Tip" Bard, 23, from Barnet, was wounded on July 13, 1863 and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>34</sup> The fight cost the regiment 2 killed, 8 wounded, and 5 missing. William Wells attacked with the 2nd Battalion, then down to 55 men from the over 200 at the beginning of the campaign, and, in a hand to hand fight, he was attacked by two Confederates, who cut him with their sabres. Sergeant Jerome Hatch, lying pinned to the earth by his fallen horse, shot one of the Confederates with his pistol, while Wells drove the other off. Benedict, *Vermont In the Civil War*, II, 607.

<sup>35</sup> Othniel De Forest was the 5th New York Cavalry's first colonel and was discharged on March 29, 1864.

<sup>36</sup> Darwin J. Wright, 22, from St. Johnsbury was promoted to commissary sergeant, was captured on June 29, 1864, and died at Florence, South Carolina on October 20, 1864.

<sup>37</sup> The Vermont Brigade, in open skirmish order, repulsed several massed Confederate attacks by parts of Hood's Division at Funkstown, Maryland on July 10, 1863, losing 16 killed and 59 wounded and inflicting 130–200 casualties on the troops that repulsed Farnsworth. Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, I, 391–394.

<sup>38</sup> William Farrar "Baldy" Smith (1823–1905) USMA 1845, was born in St. Albans, Vermont. Vermont's highest ranking officer, commanded the Sixth Corps at Fredericksburg, but was relieved due to criticism of Burnside. He commanded a force of Pennsylvania militia during the Gettysburg Campaign. He redeemed himself as chief engineer of the Department of the Cumberland, creating the "Cracker Line." As commander of the Eighteenth Corps under Butler he failed to capture Petersburg on June 17, 1864 and later was relieved. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 462–464.

<sup>39</sup> This charge was a turning point in the history of the 1st Vermont Cavalry. The quote is from Colonel Sawyer's report (*O.R.*, XXVII, Part 1, 1016) which placed the responsibility for attacking entrenched Confederate infantry "with only a squadron" onto Kilpatrick's shoulders, where it perhaps belongs. William Wells was outraged that either Sawyer himself ordered the attack or agreed to making it. This was Sawyer's first time in command of anything since being a company commander at the Battle of Winchester on May 25, 1862, where his horse fell and injured his leg. Wells began to talk aloud about his feelings of Sawyer's incompetence and cowardice, a man he had previously supported in the quagmire of regimental politics. This incident led to a complete and life-long break between the two.

<sup>40</sup> The squadron lost 13 killed, wounded and missing, but brought back a prisoner, the alleged object of the attack.

<sup>41</sup> Martin Van Buren Vance, 23, from Bradford, reenlisted and was mustered out as a second lieutenant on August 9, 1865.

<sup>42</sup> Ulric Dahlgren (1842–1864) then a captain, served as an aide to generals Sigel, Burnside, Hooker, and Meade. His small bands of raiders

operated in Lee's rear, but Colonel Andrew McReynolds of the 1st New York Cavalry actually destroyed Lee's pontoon bridge. Dahlgren gained notoriety after his death on the March 1864 Richmond when papers allegedly discovered on his body called for the death of Jefferson Davis and the burning of parts of Richmond.

<sup>43</sup> James Pettigrew (1828–1863) was in command of the wounded Harry Heth's division. He died at Bunker Hill, West Virginia. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 238.

<sup>44</sup> Francis H. Rowell, 21, from Thetford, reenlisted and mustered out on August 21, 1865.

<sup>45</sup> William H. French (1815–1881) USMA 1837. He assumed command of the Third Corps after his division was added as its Third Division. He was removed from command in April 1864 after botching his part of the Mine Run Campaign. Warner, 161–162.

<sup>46</sup> John Newton (1822–1895) USMA 1842. Later, he commanded a division in the Atlanta Campaign. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 344–345.

<sup>47</sup> Warren S. Norris, 18, from Burke, reenlisted and served until August 9, 1865.

<sup>48</sup> George W. Cook, 18, from Concord, enlisted on August 6, 1862 and mustered out on July 12, 1865.

<sup>49</sup> Samuel Priest, 19, from Irasburg, enlisted on January 2, 1862 and mustered out on January 4, 1865.

For Austin, see note 33.

<sup>50</sup> Patrick Gilligan, see note 21.

## Chapter 10

<sup>1</sup> Stephan A. Clark, 21, from Northfield, entered Company F as first sergeant on September 15, 1861, was promoted to second lieutenant on October 4, 1862, first lieutenant on April 14, 1865 and to captain of

Company M on June 4, 1865, but was never mustered. He left the service on August 9, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Grover, 29, from Hartford, entered Company E as first lieutenant, was promoted to captain of Company K on February 1, 1863, and major on July 7, 1864. He was wounded on May 5, 1864 and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

Ellis Edwards, 20, from Colchester, entered Company A as second lieutenant on October 11, 1861, was promoted to 1st lieutenant on July 16, 1862 and captain on February 7, 1863. He was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> John Sedgewick (1813–1864), USMA 1837, commanded the Sixth Corps. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 430–431.

<sup>4</sup> For accounts of Vermont cavalrymen in the Sixth Corps see, Thomas W. Hyde, *Following the Greek Cross*, (Boston, 1894), 167–168, 218–220.

<sup>5</sup> Adjutant Clarence D. Gates, 23, from Cambridge, was chosen by Edward Sawyer for that post on October 4, 1862 and served until November 18, 1864. He was disliked by many officers who considered him a "Sawyer man."

<sup>6</sup> The Second New York "Harris Light" Cavalry contained companies from New York and New Jersey, a squadron from Connecticut, and detachments recruited in Vermont and Indiana, and was originally raised (October 26, 1861) as the Seventh United States Cavalry, before being assigned as New York troops. Phisterer, *New York in the Rebellion*, 297.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Eugene Davies (1836–1894). Educated at Harvard, Williams and Columbia, and, like Kilpatrick, he became a captain in the 5th New York Infantry and joined the Harris Light as a major on August 1, 1861. He became colonel on June 16, 1863 and brigadier on September 16, 1863. Promoted to major general on May 4, 1865, Davies left the service in 1866 to return to his law practice. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 113.

<sup>8</sup> William Wells commanded the regiment and wrote a report dated September 20, 1863. Because the Sawyer-Wells feud was in full swing, Sawyer could hardly acknowledge Wells' performance.

<sup>9</sup> Harris Mitchell was still first sergeant of Company D at this time as a result of the Sawyer-Preston feud recorded in the previous chapter.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin O. Aiken, 24, from Albany, enlisted on September 20, 1861, reenlisted on December 28, 1863, was promoted to sergeant on December 14, 1864 and mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>11</sup> Charles A. Adams, 23, from Wallingford, entered as second lieutenant of Company H, was promoted to first lieutenant on October 4, 1862, captain on April 1, 1863, and major on November 18, 1864. He was wounded on July 3, 1863 and wounded and captured on October 11, 1863. He escaped on February 16, 1865, rejoined the regiment, and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>12</sup> Mason A. Stone, 25, from Wilmington, entered Company F as a private on October 4, 1861, was promoted to first lieutenant of Company M on August 23, 1863, and captain of Company C on July 7, 1864. He was mustered out on August 9, 1865 as brevet major.

<sup>13</sup> Henry C. Phillips, 26, of Waterbury, entered Company C as a sergeant on September 11, 1861 and was reduced on June 9, 1864. He was again promoted to sergeant on October 1, 1864 and mustered out on November 18, 1864. Phillips was captured on September 26, 1863 and paroled three days later.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Atkinson Humphreys (1810–1883), USMA 1831. Then Chief of Staff to General Meade, he replaced Hancock in command of the Second Corps in November 1864. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 240–242.

<sup>15</sup> Alfred T.A. Torbert (1833–1880) USMA 1855. After commanding the New Jersey Brigade in the Sixth Corps, Torbert commanded the 1st Cavalry Division in April 1864 and after August 1864 commanded the cavalry in the Army of the Shenandoah. See, A.D. Slade, *A. T. A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Union Blue*, (Dayton, 1992) and George A. Townsend, *Major General Alfred Thomas Archimedes Torbert*, (Bowie, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> Henry Gervais, 18, from Brattleboro, enlisted on September 30, 1861, was wounded on July 6, 1863, and was discharged on July 18, 1864 for disability.

<sup>17</sup> Johnstone took command of the 5th New York Cavalry on September 10, 1862 and was relieved on June 1, 1863. Boudrye, 204.

<sup>18</sup> Sawyer meant Henry Davies. Sawyer consistently called him Davis throughout his diary.

<sup>19</sup> For his part, Adams questioned Sawyer's bravery. In a letter to Wells from Libby Prison on December 21, 1863 he writes: "I saw the Col with his face towards Vermont when we went into that last charge. Did he go direct?" Wells Papers.

<sup>20</sup> Jason A. Stone, 35, from Wilmington, was the brother of Mason A. Stone. He enlisted on September 25, 1861 and died in Richmond of wounds on November 28, 1863 as a paroled prisoner.

<sup>21</sup> Guy Haynes, 19, from Albany, enlisted on October 28, 1861, was taken prisoner on May 24, 1862, paroled on September 13, 1862, transferred to the V.R.C. on March 29, 1864 and was discharged on November 19, 1864.

<sup>22</sup> One hundred seventy-one men reenlisted in the regiment; 33 in Company E, making it the only company sent home in a body.

## Chapter 11

<sup>1</sup> At this time Colonel Sawyer commanded the brigade and Addison Preston the regiment. Sawyer failed to post proper pickets. See, William Lee, *Personal and Historic Sketches of the Seventh Regiment Michigan Volunteer Cavalry*, (Detroit, 1990), 30–32, 200–201 and Kidd, 235–239.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Ray, 23, from Bennington, enlisted in Company G on September 26, 1861 as first sergeant. He was promoted to first lieutenant on October 4, 1862 and captain on April 28, 1863. Ray was wounded on May 11, 1864 and, on October 9, 1864, he was the last Vermont cavalry officer killed in action.

John Williamson, 23, entered Company K as second lieutenant on October 21, 1861, was promoted to first lieutenant on July 16, 1862 and died June 20, 1864 of wounds received June 15.

These officers commanded companies G and K served as part of Dahlgren's detachment. Company G lost one man mortally wounded and 14 men taken prisoner. Company K lost one killed and 15 captured. Only two or three of the prisoners from each company survived imprisonment. All of the casualties were recruits who enlisted in December 1863 and January 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Addison Preston commanded the force that tried to punish the Ulric Dahlgren's killers. Dahlgren had been ambushed in King and Queen County. Edward Sawyer appears to have been relieved from duty at this point.

<sup>4</sup> A good source on the raid is Virgil Carrington Jones, *Eight Hours Before Richmond*, (New York, 1957).

<sup>5</sup> Edgar P. Sloan, 19, from Shoreham, enlisted on September 23, 1861, reenlisted on December 31, 1863, was promoted to corporal on November 19, 1864, and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>6</sup> John Shea, 21, from Brighton, enlisted on November 19, 1863, was taken prisoner on June 1, 1864, and died at Andersonville on January 23, 1865.

<sup>7</sup> I cannot account for the discrepancy of four men.

<sup>8</sup> Probably Lieutenant Colonel Robert Alexander Caskie of the 10th Virginia Cavalry, who never was promoted to full colonel.

<sup>9</sup> Brigadier General Henry Alexander Wise (1806-1876) then commanded troops under Beauregard in Florida. He was a brother-in-law to George Gordon Meade. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 342.

<sup>10</sup> Taken from the *Report of the Adjutant and Inspector General*, (Montpelier, 1864), 79-86.

The following table is taken from page 86:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Aggregate</u>	<u>On Duty</u>	<u>Sick</u>	<u>Absent/Arrest</u>
Sep. 29, '63	792	557	214	21
Oct. 28, '63	776	568	194	14
Nov. 28, '63	794	599	189	6
Dec. 28, '63	786	623	147	16

Jan. 28, '64	1113	799	188	126
Feb. 28, '64	1128	931	181	16
Mar. 28, '64	1076	863	182	26
Apl. 28, '64	1062	847	182	33
June 7, '64	1014	749	245	20
July 10, '64	920	639	275	6
Aug. 29, '64	925	633	284	7

The following is from the 1865 report, page 82.

Sep. 30, '64	957	638	298	21
Oct. 31, '64	990	544	221	225 *
Nov. 30, '64	902	609	281	12
Dec. 31, '64	908	593	292	23
Feb. 28, '65	893	665	213	13
Mar. 31, '65	888	615	214	59
Apl. 30, '65	899	593	234	72

\* enroute to muster out

These figures do not show prisoners of war, but do indicate the effect of keeping the regiment recruited to strength. The "on duty" strength does not show detailed men away from the regiment.

<sup>11</sup> The rest of the regiment left in detachments or as individuals. Credit goes to Captain Oliver Cushman to have at least three-fourths of his eligible men reenlist, the number needed to send a unit home intact.

<sup>12</sup> Sawyer left for Vermont on recruiting duty on November 21, 1863 and returned in command of the 2nd Brigade on February 3, 1864. However, Preston led the brigade after March 3 and Sawyer returned home for a twenty-three day leave in March and April 1864.

Sawyer's Personnel File, National Archives.

<sup>13</sup> Custer was on leave. Sawyer returned on April 19, 1864, but four days later submitted his resignation.

<sup>14</sup> George Chapman (1833-1883). He entered the 3rd Indiana Cavalry as a major in October 1861. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 80-81.



<sup>15</sup> Presumably, Sawyer resigned to avoid unstated charges while the regiment briefly served in the 1st Division. Sawyer's April 23rd resignation was endorsed by brigade commander Custer, "Believing it to be for the interest of the service and particularly for the regiment I most respectfully recommend that this officers resignation be immediately accepted." Division commander Alfred Torbert added, "Respectfully forwarded approved as from his own statement he is not of much benefit to the service." Sheridan "recommended highly" Sawyer's resignation the next day and Meade approved and forwarded the resignation for filing with the Adjutant General on April 28.

## Chapter 12

<sup>1</sup> John W. Bennet, 25, from Newbury, entered Compang D as first lieutenant on October 15, 1861, was promoted captain on October 30, 1862, major on June 1, 1863, and lieutenant colonel June 4, 1864, before being mustered out on November 18, 1864. He was wounded on May 5, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> George W. Austin, 21, from Burlington, enlisted on October 19, 1861 and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Denison C. Badger, 21, from Derby, enlisted on November 30, 1863 and died at Salisbury, North Carolina in November 1864.

<sup>4</sup> Hiram P. Danforth, 19, from Danville, enlisted on September 21, 1861, reenlisted on December 28, 1863, and was promoted corporal. He was captured April 1, 1863 and paroled April 7, dying on August 1, 1864 of wounds received June 3, 1864.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick C. Gilligan, 23, from Brookfield enlisted on September 18, 1861, was captured May 5, 1864 and escaped on February 5, 1865. He was mustered out on May 19, 1865. Hundreds of "Galvanized Rebs" used enlistment in the Confederate Army to escape the conditions of prison and then deserted. Faust, 296.

<sup>6</sup> Clark P. Stone, 34, from Brattleboro, enlisted as a private in Company F on September 14, 1861, was promoted to second lieutenant July 16, 1862, first lieutenant on October 4, 1862 and captain on April 14,

1865. He was taken prisoner on June 1, 1864 and paroled March 11, 1865. He mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>7</sup> Henry O. Wheeler, 20, from South Hero, enlisted as a corporal on October 2, 1861, was promoted to sergeant on December 1, 1862 and first lieutenant on September 24, 1863. He was wounded on May 5, 1864 and was wounded and captured on October 7, 1864. Paroled February 22, 1865, he was mustered out on March 8, 1865.

Five of the wounded died.

<sup>8</sup> John W. Woodbury, 18, from Concord, enlisted on October 22, 1861 and reenlisted on December 31, 1863. He was promoted to sergeant, was wounded July 13, 1863, and died June 24, 1864 of wounds received the previous day.

Albert G. Call, 24, from Berkshire, enlisted on August 26, 1862. He was captured on September 22, 1862 and paroled on November 22, 1862. Wounded and captured on June 23, 1864, he was paroled February 5, 1865. He was mustered out on June 21, 1865. On September 1, 1863, he transferred to the V.R.C., but returned back to his company on October 23, 1863.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Benois, 22, from Danville, enlisted on December 3, 1863 and died at Andersonville on August 22, 1864.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Baillie McIntosh (1829–1888) was appointed a second lieutenant in the 2nd U.S. Cavalry in 1861. In November 1862 he became colonel of the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry and later commanded a brigade under Pleasonton. He rose to brigadier general, lost a leg at Winchester, and continued in the Army until 1870. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 300–301.

<sup>11</sup> James Byron Gordon (1822–1864), colonel of the 1st North Carolina Cavalry, was elevated to brigadier general of the North Carolina cavalry brigade. He was mortally wounded, dying on May 18, 1864. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 110–111.

<sup>12</sup> "...the men were becoming restive when General Custer rode by from the edge of the woods, where he had been superintending the operations of the skirmish line, and as he passed informed Colonel Preston that he was about to make a charge on that battery, and asked if he would like a hand

in the affair. The colonel replied that he was agreeable and was directed to wheel the regiment to the right into column of squadrons. The story at the time was that Colonel Chapman, commanding the brigade, objected to Preston's joining Custer, and that the latter appealed to Sheridan, who told him to take any regiment that was willing to go with him. Custer then formed the First Michigan under the cover of the woods, for the purpose of charging the battery on the flank, while the First Vermont attacked in front." Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 637–638. The Vermonters lost 2 killed and 10 wounded at Yellow Tavern.

<sup>13</sup> William W. Foster, 25, from Irasburg, enlisted in Company I on September 26, 1861 as a corporal. He was promoted to sergeant on December 10, 1862, reenlisted on December 28, 1863, was promoted to second lieutenant on November 19, 1864, to first lieutenant on February 9, 1865, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>14</sup> James Wright of Company D mustered out on November 18, 1865.

Malcolm G. Frost, 23, from Essex, enlisted on September 16, 1861 as a corporal. Captured on November 5 and paroled on November 22, 1862, he was promoted to sergeant on July 1, 1864 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>15</sup> White House, the home of William Henry Fitzhugh "Rooney" Lee, was destroyed during the Peninsula Campaign.

## Chapter 13

<sup>1</sup> See Louis J. Baltz III, *The Battle of Cold Harbor*, (Lynchburg, 1994), 39–42. The Second Corps operated as the northernmost corps until Wright's Sixth Corps joined to the right. Wilson's division replaced the Sixth Corps in the rear.

<sup>2</sup> Young Patrick Henry argued the "Parson's Cause" against the Virginia clergy being paid in cash instead of tobacco during the drought year of 1758. The case ended with Henry attacking the Crown that had disallowed the Two Penny Act capping the inflation of clergymen's salaries: "a King, by disallowing Acts of salutary nature, far from being father to his people, degenerates into a Tyrant, and forfeits all rights to his subject's

obedience." See Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause*, (New York, 1982), 77-79.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas E. Bartleff, 25, from Brattleboro, enlisted on September 9, 1861 as a sergeant and reenlisted on December 28, 1863.

<sup>4</sup> George M. Taylor, 22, from Grafton, enlisted in Company F on February 20, 1862, was taken prisoner on June 1, 1864, paroled on December 10, 1864 and was mustered out on March 17, 1865.

<sup>5</sup> Five men of Company F were killed or died of wounds, while the regiment lost over twenty men wounded or captured.

<sup>6</sup> Wells wrote home on June 4, 1864 that Preston "was killed on the Skirmish line, he had just ordered me to put my Battalion in line on our left, he says Maj, don't allow your men to fire, for our men are in your front. I saw nothing more of him untill I was informed that he was wounded in front of my line, several times I attempted to advance my lines to get his body but was driven back, but the third time I got his body off, he was just alive, not concious, died about 15 minutes after we got possession of him." Wells to his parents, Wells Papers.

<sup>7</sup> Danforth died of his wounds on August 1, 1864.

<sup>8</sup> "About noon Capt. Cushman of this Co. fell with ball through the breast. Within few moments our Col. A.W. Preston fell mortally wounded.... Col. was brother of one of my classmates & had recently rec'd Col's commission." Eri Woodbury to his brother A.J. Woodbury, June 5, 1864, Eri Woodbury Papers, Dartmouth College. Woodbury and Cushman were in the Class of 1863 with William Henry Preston. Cushman left at the end of his sophomore year to enlist; Woodbury enlisted in December 1863.

<sup>9</sup> Harvey J. Bickford, 19, from Danville, enlisted in Company D on September 16, 1861 and was recorded as being discharged for disability on October 11, 1862. Ide perhaps means Charles W. Bickford, 20, from Glover, but he was recorded as being trans-ferred to the V.R.C. on May 15, 1864 and discharged on August 2, 1864.

Charles Hidden, 22, from Danville, enlisted in Company D on November 30, 1863 and mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>10</sup> The First New Hampshire Cavalry joined the brigade early in June. Four companies of this unit had enlisted in 1861 as the New Hampshire Battalion of the 1st New England Cavalry, which was later redesignated the 1st Rhode Island Cavalry. In the winter of 1863–1864 the New Hampshire Battalion was removed, sent home, and became the core of the 1st New Hampshire. Three new companies joined the battalion in the field, and, although the state raised five additional companies in the summer and fall of 1864, they were filled with bounty jumpers and considered so unreliable that they neither left the Defenses of Washington nor were mounted. Otis F.R. Waite, *New Hampshire in the Great Rebellion*, (Claremont, 1870), 544–554.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Heath, 20, from Northfield, enlisted on September 19, 1861 as a corporal and was promoted sergeant on November 18, 1861.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Wylie Crawford (1829–1892) became an Army surgeon in 1851, served in Fort Sumter during the bombardment, transferred to the line. He was promoted brigadier general in April 1862, and led the 3rd Division, Fifth Corps. He retired in 1873. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 99–100.

<sup>13</sup> Leonard N. Bishop, 44, from St. Johnsbury, enlisted on November 23, 1863, was captured on June 29, 1864, and died in Florence, South Carolina on December 1, 1864.

<sup>14</sup> John Williamson, 23, joined Company K as second lieutenant on October 21, 1861, was promoted to first lieutenant on July 16, 1862, and died of his wounds on June 20, 1864.

<sup>15</sup> Henry G. Marsh, 18, from Newbury, enlisted on December 22, 1863 and was recorded as being discharged to date December 9, 1864 by Special Order of the War Department. He perhaps returned from desertion under amnesty to obtain a discharge.

<sup>16</sup> John E. Goodrich, 33, from Burlington, became chaplain on April 7, 1864, serving until August 9, 1865.

## Chapter 14

<sup>1</sup> For Captain Grover, see note 2, chapter 10.

<sup>2</sup> Antipas Curtis survived the raid, only to desert on October 4, 1864. He returned on November 26, 1864 and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Augustus Valentine Kautz (1828–1895), USMA 1852, was a career soldier who commanded the small cavalry division of the Army of the James. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 257–258.

<sup>4</sup> Hannibal S. Jenne, 20, from Berkshire, enlisted on September 18, 1861, was promoted corporal on March 24, 1863, and sergeant on March 1, 1864. He was also wounded on July 8, 1863.

<sup>5</sup> John W. Woodbury, 18, from Concord enlisted on October 22, 1861, reenlisted on December 31, 1863. He was also wounded on July 13, 1863.

<sup>6</sup> Hiram H. Hall, 25, graduated from the University of Vermont in 1862 and enlisted in Company L as a private on August 15, 1862. From Williston, he was promoted to second lieutenant of Company E on February 1, 1863, first lieutenant on March 17, 1863 and captain on June 4, 1864. His commission arrived a day after he was killed. See, John E. Goodrich, *Captain Hiram Hall*, (Burlington, 1912). His grave was marked, and he was reburied in Lake View Cemetery in Burlington. Later, against his wishes stated at the time of his enlistment, he was reburied in the family plot in Williston.

<sup>7</sup> Richard A. Seaver, 25, from Pomfret, entered Company E as a sergeant on October 1, 1861. He was commissioned second lieutenant to date June 4, 1864, and was mustered out on November 18, 1864. He was captured on July 6, 1863 and paroled on December 28, 1863.

<sup>8</sup> Trussell and Call made it back to Union lines. Josiah H. Moore, 21, from Barnet enlisted as a sergeant in Company D on September 25, 1861, was promoted to second lieutenant on June 1, 1863, and first lieutenant on May 9, 1865. He reenlisted on December 31, 1863, was wounded on April 1, 1863 and June 23, and captured on June 29. He was paroled on September 12, 1864 and mustered out on June 21, 1865.

William Greenleaf, 19, from Colchester, enlisted as a sergeant in Company L on August 11, 1862, was promoted first sergeant on March 1, 1864, second lieutenant February 28, 1864, and first lieutenant on February 9, 1865. He was wounded on July 13, 1863 and June 23, 1864, captured on June 29, paroled on August 13, 1864, and discharged on May 15, 1865. Following the war, he became adjutant general of Vermont.

Daniel C. Walker, 20, from Cambridge, enlisted in Company D in August 15, 1862, and was promoted sergeant on December 7, 1864. He was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

Carlos Kinsbury, Jr., 18, was a substitute for Harvey N. Kingsbury and enrolled on March 9, 1864 in Company D. He was promoted corporal on May 24, 1865 and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>9</sup> Ide's great-grandson Nicholas Ide believes this church was St. Mark's Church on Route 626. "St. Mark's is the only church on the road between the battlefield and 'Hungarytown,' is clearly marked on the 1858 map... I think H. K. was confused when he wrote his account." Nicholas Ide to editor, July 24, 1996.

<sup>10</sup> Gilbert Steward, 23, from Clarendon, enlisted in Company G as a private on October 14, 1861, was promoted to second lieutenant on October 4, 1862 and first lieutenant on April 28, 1863. He was also wounded on July 6, 1863. He was considered the best swordsman in the regiment.

<sup>11</sup> Norman J. Kingsbury, 22, from Danville, enlisted on November 28, 1863, and died on July 4, 1864.

<sup>12</sup> Darwin J. Wright, 22, from St. Johnsbury, enlisted in Company D on October 21, 1861 and was promoted commissary sergeant. He died at Florence, South Carolina on October 20, 1864.

<sup>13</sup> The 1st Vermont and 1st New Hampshire were the only regiments in Wilson's division to keep their organizations intact. The Vermonters lost nearly one hundred men altogether, including 18 killed or died of wounds.

<sup>14</sup> Swinton, 513-514.

<sup>15</sup> James B. Abbott, 20, from Barton, enlisted in Company D on August 11, 1862, was promoted corporal on July 1, 1864, and sergeant on December 7, 1864. He was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>16</sup> "Beauregard" Boomhower replaced William W. Whitney, 22, from Eden who enlisted in Company D on August 18, 1862. He was promoted corporal on July 4, 1864 and later elevated to sergeant. He was captured November 5, 1862 and paroled on November 22, 1862. He died of disease on January 9, 1865.

<sup>17</sup> Carlos A. Barrows, 27, from Wallingford, enlisted in Company H on September 23, 1861 as first sergeant, was promoted to second lieutenant on April 1, 1863, and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>18</sup> See note 14, Chapter 12.

<sup>19</sup> Buglar George W. Nownes, 42, was the oldest of four Nownes in Company C. From Marshfield, he enlisted on September 20, 1861 and mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>20</sup> Martin Van Buren Vance, was then quartermaster sergeant of Company D.

<sup>21</sup> Possibly a sutler.

<sup>22</sup> Warren S. Norris, 18, from Burke, enlisted in Company D on November 9, 1861, reenlisted on February 24, 1864, was promoted sergeant on October 1, 1864. He was mustered out as first sergeant on August 9, 1865.

## Chapter 15

<sup>1</sup> Martin Van Buren Vance, was the quartermaster sergeant; Frederick Wiggins, 24, from Barton, enlisted August 11, 1862, captured April 1, 1863, and paroled April 7, 1863. He was promoted corporal October 7, 1864, reduced February 1, 1865, mustered out June 21, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> This is as printed in the *Adjutant and Inspector General's Report*, (Montpelier, 1865), 37-39.

<sup>3</sup> Loren W. Young, "44", of Company D, mustered out on November 18, 1864. Ferry is either Carlostin C. Ferry or Francis E. Ferry of Company I.



<sup>4</sup> Loren Packard, 19, from Waterford, enlisted in Company F on August 18, 1862, was promoted to corporal on May 4, 1865 and mustered out on June 21, 1865. Captured on July 6, 1863, he was paroled on December 28, 1863.

<sup>5</sup> Sergeant George A. Hyde, 32, from Eden enlisted in Company I on September 30, 1861 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864

The other Hyde is either Freeman or Lewis C. Hyde from Lyndon, both of whom enlisted in Company D in December 1863 and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

Dan Adams, 23, from Concord, enlisted in Company D on October 28, 1861, reenlisted on December 31, 1863, was promoted sergeant on February 1, 1865 and mustered out on June 21, 1865. He was captured on October 7, 1864 and paroled on February 15, 1865.

Henry C. Moore, 20, from Barnet, was transferred to the V.R.C. on November 30, 1864 and discharged on May 5, 1865.

<sup>6</sup> Robinson may be Wyman A (Co. A), John M. (B), Joseph M. (E), or Peter (H); Leashure cannot be identified.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Guyette, 17, from Burlington, enlisted in Company K on November 13, 1861, reenlisted on December 31, 1863, was promoted corporal on November 19, 1864, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>8</sup> Edward P. Lee commanded Company B, 11th Vermont; the others cannot be identified.

<sup>9</sup> Mason A. Stone commanded Company A.

<sup>10</sup> Harvey Marchres, 20, from Peacham, enlisted in Company D on September 24, 1861 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864. Also spelled Marckres.

<sup>11</sup> Probably Private John W. Mobberley, born 1844 in Frederick County, Maryland, enlisted January 11, 1862 in Company A, 35th Virginia Cavalry. He scouted for Mosby on July 30, 1864. He raided on his own in winter of 1864-65 and killed by Loudoun Rangers on April 4, 1865. See Keen and Mewborn, 349.

<sup>12</sup> Harris D. Mitchell, 22, from Newbury enlisted as a sergeant in Company D on September 28, 1861, and reenlisted on January 20, 1864. He was promoted to second lieutenant of Company I on March 22, 1864, and captain of Company A on November 19, 1864. He mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>13</sup> See Henry Norton, *Deeds of Daring*, (Norwich, N.Y., 1889), 91.

<sup>14</sup> William Henry Chapman (1840–1929) began the war as a lieutenant in the Dixie Artillery and joined Mosby after the battalion was disbanded in October 1862. He fought prominently against the Vermonters at Miskell Farm and ended the war as lieutenant colonel. This Rebel later became an official of the Internal Revenue Service! Keen and Mewborn, 305–306. Private Henry Smith of the 13th New York Cavalry shot Mosby on September 14. Page 173.

<sup>15</sup> Decker was then sergeant in Company D.

<sup>16</sup> Caleb Moore entered as a captain on December 11, 1861, was promoted to major on June 23, 1863 and mustered out on December 8, 1864. Norton, *Deeds of Daring*, 159, 161.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Caraway, 18, from Bradford, enlisted on December 8, 1863, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>18</sup> Ide's casualty report in his personnel file held at the National Archives shows that he was wounded in the testicles.

<sup>19</sup> George P. Blair, 25, from Peacham, enlisted in Company D on September 24, 1861 as a private, was promoted quartermaster sergeant and regimental quarter-master sergeant on May 4, 1864, and was mustered out on November 18, 1864.

<sup>20</sup> Frederick Holdredge, 20, from Bridport, enlisted in Company K on September 21, 1861, reenlisted on December 31, 1863. He was captured and paroled on July 1, 1863. He was promoted Hospital Steward on November 19, 1864, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

## Chapter 16

<sup>1</sup> Wells to his parents, October 4, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Edward J. Stackpole, *Sheridan in the Shenandoah*, (Harrisburg, 1961), Chapter nine; Jeffrey Wert, *From Winchester to Cedar Creek*, (Carlisle, 1987), Chapter five. Elliott W. Hoffman, "General Theodore Ripley and Ultimate Revenge," *Historical New Hampshire*, Volume 46, Number 3, Fall, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Eri Woodbury to his father, October 3, 1864, Eri Woodbury Papers.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Wells to his parents, September 25, 1864; *Revised Roster*, 231.

<sup>6</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 658–659; Charles Farr, "Diary," United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

<sup>7</sup> Wells to his parents, September 25, 1864.

<sup>8</sup> *Revised Roster*, 220.

<sup>9</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>10</sup> Farr, "Diary."

<sup>11</sup> Woodbury, "Diary"; Farr, "Diary"; George Alfred Townsend, *Major General Alfred Thomas Archimedes Torbert*, (Bowie 1993), 42–43; A. D. Slade, *A. T. A. Torbert: Southern Gentleman in Blue*, (Dayton, 1992), 141–143.

<sup>12</sup> Stackpole, 257–259.

<sup>13</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Wells to his parents, October 4, 1864. I have read the letters and diaries of nearly twenty Vermont cavalrymen; not one had a positive thing to say about Wilson and not one had a disparaging thing to say about Custer.

<sup>17</sup> Woodbury, "Diary"; Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 661.

<sup>18</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 661. It is possible that by the first week in October that the regiment contained about three hundred men who would not be mustered out in November.

<sup>19</sup> Farr, "Diary."

<sup>20</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Millard K. Bushong and Dean M. Bushong, *Fightin' Tom Rosser, C.S.A.*, (Shippensburg, 1983), chapter 12; McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade*, 299–305; Frank M. Meyers, *The Commanches: A History of White's Battalion, Virginia Cavalry*, (Baltimore, 1871), 333–339; *Revised Roster*, 225.

<sup>23</sup> Farr, "Diary."

<sup>24</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>25</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 661–662. *Revised Roster*, 232, 234, 239. Both Buchman and Champlain were reenlisted veterans and not likely to have deserted. The 1st New Hampshire Cavalry had three men hanged by the Confederates on October 6th. Ayling, 871, 875, 885.

<sup>26</sup> George M. Neese, *Three Years in the Confederate Horse Artillery*, (Dayton, 1988), 318–319.

<sup>27</sup> Benedict stated Lowell was killed on October 9th.

<sup>28</sup> Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 662.

<sup>29</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>30</sup> Farr, "Diary."

<sup>31</sup> Williams Carter Wickham (1820–1888), a militia officer who became lieutenant colonel of the 4th Virginia Cavalry in 1861 and brigadier general in September 1863. He resigned his commission on November 9, 1864 to take his seat in the Confederate Congress. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 335–336.

<sup>32</sup> Adjutant Clarence Gates.

Henry E. Smith, 21, from Brattleboro, enlisted as sergeant on September 21, 1861, reenlisted, and was mustered out as first sergeant of Company D on August 9, 1865.

William C. Joyce, 21, from Northfield, enlisted as sergeant on September 15, 1861, reenlisted, was promoted quartermaster sergeant on November 19, 1865 and second lieutenant on June 4, 1865 (not mustered). He was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

George B. Mattoon, 18, from Brattleboro, enlisted on September 20, 1861 and mustered out on November 19, 1864. Also given as Mattson.

Warren K. Spaulding, 19, from Andover enlisted on December 24, 1863, was promoted corporal on November 19, 1864 and mustered out on August 9, 1865.

Edmund Stone, 18, from Cavendish, enlisted on October 28, 1861, reenlisted, and mustered out August 9, 1865.

<sup>33</sup> Unsigned letter in *Vermont Chronicle*, November 5, 1864.

Alvah R. Haswell, 19, from Bennington, enlisted on October 2, 1861, promoted sergeant December 24, 1862, captured April 1, 1863, and paroled April 7, 1863. Wounded September 13, 1863, he reenlisted, was promoted first lieutenant on November 19, 1864, and captain on May 9, 1865. Mustered out on August 9, 1865.

Frederick W. Cook, 22, from Manchester, enlisted on September 28, 1861, was promoted commissary sergeant on July 19, 1863, second lieutenant on November 19, 1864, and first lieutenant on May 9, 1865. He was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>34</sup> Wells to Anna Richardson, October 10, 1864.

<sup>35</sup> Bennett's report in *Report of the Adjutant & Inspector General*, 1865, Appendix C, 40–41. Hereafter *AIG's Report*.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 644n.

<sup>37</sup> Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>38</sup> Farr, "Diary."

<sup>39</sup> Stackpole, *Sheridan*, 281–318; The best discussion of Wells's regimental battle with Rosser is Theodore C. Mahr, *The Battle of Cedar Creek*, (Lynchburg, 1992), 104–110. Mahr's book has limited usefulness in that he had combed libraries for overlooked Confederate materials, but he has failed to use Federal manuscript sources. In attempting to eliminate a Federal bias, he has ignored some pertinent sources. Of much less value are Jeffry D. Wert's *From Winchester to Cedar Creek* and Thomas A. Lewis's *The Guns of Cedar Creek*, (New York, 1988). Joseph W. A. Whitehorne, *The Battle of Cedar Creek*, (Strasburg, 1987), is a fine guide to the battlefield.

<sup>40</sup> Wells to his parents, October 21, 1864.

<sup>41</sup> *AIG's Report*, Appendix C, 42.

<sup>42</sup> The regiment suffered no killed at Cedar Creek.

<sup>43</sup> J.W.Bennett to General Augustus Hamlin, December 22, 1902, in Hamlin, "Who Recaptured the Guns at Cedar Creek October 19, 1864?" printed in *The Battle of Cedar Creek*, (Gaithersburg, 1987), no editor given, no pages numbers printed. It also appears in the *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts*, Volume VI, (Wilmington, 1989), 201–206.

<sup>44</sup> Printed in *AIG's Report*, Appendix C, 43. Perhaps another reason Bennett did not press his claims was that he left for muster out on the same day the receipt was issued, October 22, 1864.

<sup>45</sup> Woodbury, "Diary".

<sup>46</sup> W. F. Beyer and O. F. Keydel, eds., *Deeds of Valor*, I, (Detroit, 1906), 450.

<sup>47</sup> There was no Sergeant Haskell in the regiment.

<sup>48</sup> Quoted in Beyer and Keydel, 447–448. Lyon, 19, enlisted on December 31, 1862 and mustered out as a sergeant on August 9, 1865. Sweeney, 18, from Essex, enlisted on December 14, 1863 and mustered out as a corporal on August 9, 1865. Another James Sweeney, 27, enlisted in Company A on December 17, 1863 and mustered out on June 14, 1865. Ramseur is the subject of Gary W. Gallagher, *Stephen Dodson Ramseur: Lee's Gallant General*, (Chapel Hill, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> J.E. Taylor, *With Sheridan Up the Shenandoah Valley in 1864*, (Dayton, 1989), 535; Woodbury, "Diary."

<sup>50</sup> Wells to his parents, October 21, 1864.

<sup>51</sup> *AIG's Report*, Appendix C, 44.

<sup>52</sup> Jeffry D. Wert, *Mosby's Rangers*, (New York, 1990), 247–249. Wert relied on contemporary newspaper accounts without checking the *Revised Roster*.

<sup>53</sup> *AIG's Report*, 82 and Appendix C, 43; Undated copy of officers recommended for promotion, Wells Papers; Woodbury, "Diary". Alexander B. Chandler, 30, from Pomfret, enlisted as first sergeant in Company E on September 19, 1861, was promoted second lieutenant on March 17, 1863, first lieutenant on June 4, 1864, and captain on July 7, 1864. Woodbury noted that he was arrested twice in 1865 for infractions. He was mustered out on June 21, 1865. Harris B. Mitchell, 22, from Newbury, enlisted as a sergeant in Company D on September 28, 1861, reenlisted on January 20, 1864, was promoted second lieutenant on March 22, 1864 and captain of Company A on November 19, 1864. He was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>54</sup> *AIG's Report*, Appendix C, 44.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Wells to his father, November 14, 1864.

<sup>57</sup> *Revised Roster*, 228–230.

<sup>58</sup> *AIG's Report*, Appendix C, 44.

## Chapter 17

<sup>1</sup> There was not a Vermont soldier named Barney Stone, and no one surnamed Stone in the regiment was listed as being wounded on September 19, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Edward B. Nims, 26, from Burlington, served as assistant surgeon from May 9, 1864 to August 9, 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Patrick H. Caldwell, 26, from Johnson, enlisted as quartermaster sergeant of Company I on September 19, 1861, became regimental quartermaster sergeant on December 24, 1862, second lieutenant of Company I on April 1, 1863, and first lieutenant on December 16, 1863. He was wounded on July 6, 1863. He became Regimental Quartermaster on November 19, 1864, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>4</sup> Carlostin C. Ferry, 34, from Hyde Park, enlisted in Company I on September 19, 1861 and was mustered out on November 18, 1864. He was captured on October 24 and paroled on October 30, 1862.

<sup>5</sup> Loren Young of Company D.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Cummings, 44, from Brattleboro was commissioned lieutenant colonel on February 9, 1864. He was wounded on May 6, 1864, and killed on September 30, 1864 at Poplar Grove Church. See Benedict, *Vermont in the Civil War*, II, 523. He had served previously as a private in the 11th Vermont and lieutenant colonel of the 16th Vermont.

<sup>7</sup> George B. McClellan, *Report of the Organization and Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, (New York, 1864).

<sup>8</sup> This was a reference to the great success of the regiment at Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864.

<sup>9</sup> John Bennett was mustered out as lieutenant colonel on November 18, 1864.

<sup>10</sup> Recruits for the Frontier Cavalry. Vermont supplied two companies (and Massachusetts three) for the 26th New York Cavalry to patrol the



Canadian border after the St. Albans Raid on October 19, 1864. *Revised Roster*, 656-661.

<sup>11</sup> Barney Decker lived in Derby. He was promoted to second lieutenant of Company C on November 19, 1864.

<sup>12</sup> Henry J. Hicks, 26, from Derby enlisted as a corporal in Company M on September 26, 1862, was promoted to quartermaster sergeant on November 12, 1863 and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>13</sup> Josiah Grout, Jr. had been discharged as first lieutenant of Company I on October 1, 1863 for wounds received April 1, 1863. After vainly trying for reinstatement in the 1st Vermont in the fall of 1864, Grout raised one of the companies for the Frontier Cavalry and became a major on March 22, 1865. He mustered out on June 27, 1865. Grout later became governor of Vermont. See, Josiah Grout, *Memoir of Gen'l William Wallace Grout and Autobiography*, (Newport, 1919).

<sup>14</sup> Barney Decker.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Hidden.

<sup>16</sup> John Woodard.

<sup>17</sup> George Austin.

## Chapter 18

<sup>1</sup> Josiah Hall had been paroled on August 3, 1864, but after a period of recovery of his health, had been placed on duty at the remount camp at Washington.

<sup>2</sup> Just south of the town of Woodstock.

<sup>3</sup> Ide, still a sergeant, commanded Company D. He had been promoted to first lieutenant on November 19, 1864, but had not yet been mustered.

<sup>4</sup> Seymour L. Kneeland, 18, from Waitsfield, enlisted on November 30, 1863, was paroled on March 10, 1865, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>5</sup> William H. Payne commanded the 5th, 6th and 15th Virginia Cavalry regiments.

<sup>6</sup> Torbert's raid failed to accomplish anything. Stackpole, 380–382.

<sup>7</sup> David Allen Russell (1820–1864), USMA 1845, commanded the 1st Division Sixth Corps. Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 416–417.

<sup>8</sup> Carlos A. Barrows, 27, from Wallingford, enlisted in Company H as first sergeant on September 23, 1861, was promoted to second lieutenant on April 1, 1863, and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

John H. Hazelton, 24, from Rutland, enlisted as quartermaster sergeant of Company H on September 18, 1861, was promoted first sergeant on August 1, 1862. He was elevated to second lieutenant on October 30, 1862, first lieutenant on April 1, 1863, and captain of Company M on July 6, 1863. Promoted to major on May 23, 1865, he was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>9</sup> Josiah H. Moore of Company D.

<sup>10</sup> "While at a halt Sergt. Yates in handling his Carbine accidentally discharged it. Ball passed through outside door—inch board—of a house 50 rds off & entered the thigh of Mrs. Ridings, a lady 35 years of age. Ball remains in wound." Eri Woodbury Diary.

<sup>11</sup> The area of Westchester County ravaged 1776–1783 by "Cowboys," British sympathizers, and "Skinners," Patriot supporters.

## Chapter 19

<sup>1</sup> Wells actually did not receive his brevet until after Appomattox, although he knew that he had been promoted on February 22, 1865. See Wells Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Asa Benway, 30, from Hartland enlisted on September 1, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Jubal Early fled the United States in disguise through Cuba to Toronto, where he wrote *A Memoir of the Last year of the War* in 1867. Early returned to Virginia in 1869.

<sup>4</sup> According to Horace Mewborn, author of *The 43rd Battalion Mosby's Command*, none of Mosby's homes were burned during the war.

<sup>5</sup> The German soldiers from Burgoyne's Convention Army were imprisoned here after 1778. See, Elliott W. Hoffman, *The German Soldiers in the American Revolution*, (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of New Hampshire, 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Charles N. Jones, 44, from Bethel, entered Company E as quartermaster sergeant on September 23, 1861, and reenlisted. Although promoted to second lieutenant on April 14, 1865, he was mustered out as quartermaster sergeant on June 21, 1865. He was captured on May 24, 1862 and paroled on September 13, 1862.

## Chapter 20

<sup>1</sup> Swinton, 570.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Hogan, 18, from Springfield, enlisted in Company E on October 2, 1861, and reenlisted on December 28, 1861. He was wounded and captured on May 12, 1864, paroled on August 13, 1864, and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>3</sup> *With General Sheridan in Lee's Last Campaign*, (Philadelphia, 1866), 49-51.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin F. Clifford, 26, from Danville, enlisted in Company D on September 16, 1861 and was discharged for disability on June 19, 1862. He enlisted again, for one year, on September 1, 1864, was promoted corporal on December 7, 1864 and mustered out on June 21, 1865. He was wounded and captured on April 9, 1865.

William Cassady, 25, from Barnet, enlisted for one year on September 12, 1864, was promoted corporal on December 7, 1864, and was mustered out on June 21, 1865.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Custer joined his older brother in November 1864 after three years in the 21st Ohio Infantry. Tom Custer won two Medals of Honor during the Appomattox Campaign. See, Gregory J.W. Urwin, *Custer Victorious*, (Rutherford, 1983), 219–220, 244–248.

<sup>6</sup> Jerome B. Hatch, 24, from Cabot, enlisted in Company C on October 26, 1861, and was promoted quartermaster sergeant on December 25, 1862. After reenlisting on February 24, 1864, he became Regimental Quartermaster on November 19, 1864 and first lieutenant on April 14, 1865. He was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>7</sup> Sheridan's Scouts were commanded by Major Henry H. Young of the 2nd Rhode Island Infantry. From Providence, Young entered Company A as a second lieutenant, was promoted first lieutenant on July 22, 1861, and captain on November 12, 1861. He served as inspector general of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Division, Sixth Corps from June 5, 1864, became major and Chief of Scouts on October 12, 1864, and lieutenant colonel on July 18, 1865. Young was killed in 1866 on the Mexican border as an aide to General Sheridan. Augustus Woodbury, *The Second Rhode Island Regiment*, (Providence, 1876), 438, 560.

<sup>8</sup> Alvah R. Haswell, 19, from Bennington, enlisted in Company G on October 2, 1861, and was promoted sergeant on December 24, 1862. He was captured on April 1, 1863 and paroled on April 7, 1863. After being wounded on September 13, 1863, he reenlisted December 30, 1863, was promoted to first lieutenant on November 19, 1864 and captain on May 9, 1865. He was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>9</sup> Reuben C. Sherman, 19, from West Fairlee, enlisted on December 21, 1863 in Company D and was musered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas C. Hyde, 19, from Westminster, enlisted in Company F on January 12, 1864 and was mustered out on August 9, 1865.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Witherspoon Gary (1831–1881) graduated from Harvard in 1854, rose from captain in the Hampton Legion to brigadier general on May 19, 1864. He cut his way through Union lines at Appomattox and commanded Jefferson Davis's escort on his flight across the South. Gary later became a politician and white supremacist. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 102.

- <sup>12</sup> Swinton, 16.

## Chapter 21

<sup>1</sup> John Woodbury was later reburied in his hometown of Concord, Vermont. Vital Records of Concord, Vermont.

<sup>2</sup> Charles A. Adams and Eben Grant had just returned from Confederate prisons.

<sup>3</sup> Lemuel B. Platt, the original colonel.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Capehart (1825–1895). Entered service as the surgeon of the 1st West Virginia Cavalry, rose to colonel, was breveted brigadier general on March 13, 1865 and major general on June 17, 1865. Hunt and Brown, 99.

<sup>5</sup> "Brvt Brig Genl Capehart late Col 1st Virginia Cav who has been in command of 3 Brig 3rd Div has been signing himself as Brig Genl & has untill this PM been in command of the Div, but I found him out and relieved him of his task. Rank is everything in this business." William Wells to his mother, May 28, 1865.

<sup>6</sup> John Gregory Smith, the governor of Vermont.

## Chapter 22

<sup>1</sup> The *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers* says that 114 men were killed in action or died of wounds. William Fox in his *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War*, (Albany, 1889) puts the figure at 134. By combining casualty reports and recounting the losses in the *Revised Roster* I arrived at 121 men killed or died of wounds and another six probably killed, nine prisoners of war who might have died of wounds, and five missing who might have deserted. This gives a range of from 121 to 141 who died in action or from wounds. Tallying the men who died in prison is problematical. Whether they died of disease or from wounds cannot now be determined and the extent of their wounds cannot be recovered. Four of the five who might have deserted were recent recruits to Company B (a

company raised in Franklin County on the Canadian border) who turned up missing during a skirmish on November 12, 1864.

I would add that my experience as a Division Assistant G-1 (Personnel) leads to the conclusion that unit losses from any war can be, and probably are, less than 100 per cent accurate. Just because it is written in black and white, does not make it so.

<sup>2</sup> This figure really should be more than doubled.

<sup>3</sup> The 1st Vermont Cavalry probably set an all-time U.S. Army record for any battalion in any war.

<sup>4</sup> Harry Gilmore, *Four Years in the Saddle*, (New York, 1866).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 42–44. The total losses of the Federal regiments were one killed (in the 1st Vermont) and one wounded (in the 1st Maine.) Tobie, *History of the First Maine Cavalry*, 48. William G. Burnett, *Better a Patriot Soldier's Grave*, (n.p., 1982), 10. The 6th Ohio was not at Luray. The three reports filed by commanders of the 1st Vermont, 1st Maine, and 1st Michigan Cavalry regiments all support the casualty figures. See *O.R.*, XII, Part 2, (Washington, 1885), 94–96. No Confederate report survives. Harry Gilmore wrote—with the assistance of a ghost writer—his memoirs in Fort Warren in Boston Harbor and back in Baltimore. Gilmore was an early proponent of the "Lost Cause," which, among with other things, emphasized Union losses at the hands of heroic and vastly outnumbered Confederates. Although his book is entertaining, Gilmore's memoirs, alas, contain as much fiction as fact.

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